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#25711  
A

R E P L Y

TO

MR. GIBBON'S

VINDICATION, &c.



A  
R E P L Y

T O

MR. GIBBON'S  
VINDICATION

O F

*Some Passages in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth  
Chapters of "The History of the Decline  
and Fall of the Roman Empire."*

WHEREIN

The CHARGES brought against him in the  
EXAMINATION

ARE CONFIRMED,

And further Instances given of his

MISREPRESENTATION, INACCURACY, and PLAGIARISM.

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BY HENRY EDWARDS DAVIS, B.A.  
OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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"Nam cum magna malæ superest audacia causæ

"Creditur a multis fiducia."

JUVENAL.

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L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, IN PALL-MALL.

MDCCLXXIX.

## E R R A T A.

- Page 25. line 16. for *artack* read *attack*.  
 — 27. note, for *l. xv.* read *c. xv.*  
 — 34. note †, line ult. for ψυλαφησατι read ψηλαφησατι.  
 — 35. note, line 18, for *his* read *hic*.  
 — 59. line 14, 15, for *ap-spear* read *appear*  
 — 60. line 28, read “ *mutilating and mis-translating*.  
 — 70. for Article XXI. read XXII.  
 — 75. for Article XXII. read XXIII.  
 — 77. note †, for *sosento* read *sosentō*.  
 — Ibid. note †, for *disfitions* read *disfintions*.  
 — 80. note, line 4, for *infra scripti* read *infra scripti*.  
 — 91. line 4, read *than*.  
 — 130. note †, line 5, for αρτιο λεθριας read αντι ολεθριας.  
 — 153. line 11, read *præctice*.  
 — Ibid. line 15, read *esteemed it*.

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A

R E P L Y, &c.

**W**HEN a writer contends not for personal victory, but for the establishment of a just cause; so far as the means used may have failed, or the mode adopted by him have been improperly applied, ever open to conviction, he is ready to accept the corrections even of a foe.

I engaged in this controversy, actuated by a motive very different from that which influenced Mr. Gibbon. He now openly confesses that he wrote for fame \*. A singularity of opinion, and a seeming novelty of sentiment, were therefore necessary to distinguish the man; and of course the more bold the enterprise, the more glorious the success. To subvert Christianity was an undertaking worthy the abilities of Mr. Gibbon, and to amuse men out of their religion, or make them sit easy and indifferent to it, was an achievement truly heroic. More able persons had con-

\* His expression is emphatic: "FAME is the motive, it is the reward of our labours; nor can I easily comprehend how it is possible that we should remain cold and indifferent with regard to the attempts which are made to deprive us of the most valuable object of our possessions, or at least of our hopes." *Vind.* p. 4.

*N. B.* The first edition of the *Vindication* is generally quoted.

B

futed



futed his principles, and shewn the insufficiency of his arguments: it was my part, to point out his indefensible mode of supporting the attack. Unfortunately, I am myself charged with being guilty of the same faults \*; but I trust that every candid and impartial reader will allow the truth of my *general* charge, though the *Vindication* points out some mistakes, which shall be acknowledged in the course of this *Reply*.

By my adversary I am represented as destitute of candour as well as discretion: my deficiency in the latter qualification is but too much felt by myself; yet conscious as I am of no dissingenuity, I can despise his angry invective and malevolent insinuation. Granting that I have been mistaken in some points, and too bold in some of my assertions; much may be said to extenuate my offence. Nay Mr. Gibbon himself, in his *Vindication*, suggests to me some topics of apology.

Part of what he says is this: that "a young student, who consults an author, cannot always be guided by the most accurate reference to the knowledge of the sense †."

And again, that "I set out with the stock of

\* In the famous controversy between Dr. *Middleton*, and the late Bishop *Pearce*, the Bishop produced *fifteen* instances of falshood "in his quotations and historical facts;" but the ingenuity of the Doctor endeavoured to evade the charge, and allowed but "a *poor single one* to be left, in which," says he, "you have shewn some want of attention, or too much haste in me, but no possible suspicion of any wilful misrepresentation." (Defence of Letter to Dr. Waterland, p. 59. Reply to the Letter, &c. p. 6.)

Now, though we may judge differently from Mr. Gibbon of the truth and success of the controversy between them; (See *Vind.* p. 104.) yet, after this, the candid reader will not, perhaps, be so much surprised to hear of Mr. Gibbon's manner of treating me in his *Vindication*.

† *Vind.* p. 10.

“ authorities which I found in his quotations \*.”  
 —But is he aware of the conclusion which must be drawn from hence? Had he properly supported his claim to “ the merits of *diligence* and *accuracy*,” his references and quotations could not have led me into error. It was not probable that a young student should have perused the *whole* of the many and large folios which I had cited, before my unfinished studies had been *honoured* with the humble, the *offensive* title of Bachelor of Arts †; I therefore apologised, at the conclusion of my examination, for my juvenile production; only laying claim to the small merit of being able to read the languages, and to compare the passages, to which Mr. G. had referred, with his text. If, therefore, our historian had been just, fair, and accurate, there was hardly room for a mistake.

I might plead the almost unavoidable slips which the most skilful compiler will be liable to make, searching through a variety of volumes, and consulting different editions, comparing and extracting a multiplicity of detached quotations; slips, which an unexperienced young man would more naturally make, labouring without proper assistance and helps, and hastening on with youthful eagerness, too rapidly, to the press; before he had time to arrange, or even to correct, his rough materials; apprehensive lest all his labours should become useless, by an abler champion getting before him, in the same walk of an examination of Mr. Gibbon’s authorities.

When this real state of the case is considered, the few mistakes I have been guilty of will not,

\* Vind. p. 101.

† Mr. G. says, “ *He styles himself* a Bachelor of Arts, &c. Vind. p. 1.

perhaps, be looked upon by the candid as the offspring of artifice and malice.

There is, indeed, something so very improbable in the supposition, that it hardly needs a confutation. Let Mr. Gibbon, for a moment, reflect what absurdity it implies : The historian still alive—of noted character—who was invited by the very title of my book to hear, and was able to retort, the charge, had it been *false*. Say then, what hope was there of impunity? or what inducement to swell the detail, already too tedious, of his misrepresentations and inaccuracies, (the reality of which I had firmly established) by unnecessarily having recourse to any that *I knew* to be but imaginary.

While I thus freely confess some errors that I have fallen into in my *Examination* of Mr. Gibbon's references, the reader should be reminded, that I still contend for the substantial grounds of the general charge; still I insist, that many *Inaccuracies* remain unnoticed, many *Misrepresentations* unaccounted for, by him; enough, I am confident, were I even to give up without a dispute all that he has called in question, to convince the world, that I have totally set aside his boasted claim to the merits of *accuracy* and *originality*.

But before I enter on this, let me be indulged a word or two with respect to the loud and weighty complaint of Mr. Gibbon, that "I have repeatedly applied to the historian some of the harshest epithets in the English language;—that I have prosecuted a religious crusade—with implacable spirit, and with acrimony of stile\*."

Some may, perhaps, think, that warmth of expression is, in this case, the just and proper language of

\* Vindication throughout.

the heart, and gives energy to sentiments, which flow from the powerful conviction of truth. If so, they will not be disposed to pass a very severe censure upon the indignation which a young writer felt, when encountering an author whom he had but too good reason to consider as an underminer of that religion on which mankind may build better hopes, and which affords more valuable objects of them, than Mr. Gibbon's unsubstantial bubble of fame\*.

My own sentiments cannot be better expressed, than in the words of a judicious and spirited writer: *The author of the Examination* "is not one of those cool opposers of infidelity, who can reason without earnestness, and confute without warmth. He leaves it to others, to the *soft divine* and *courtly controversialist*, to combat the most flagitious tenets with serenity—For himself, he freely owns he is apt to *kindle* as he writes; and would even blush to repel an insult on sense and virtue with less vigour than every honest man is expected to shew in his own cause †."

The Historian now openly confesses, "he had reason to expect that this obnoxious part would provoke the zeal of those who consider themselves as watchmen of the Holy City ‡." If such were his own ideas of the matter, I know not how he can call either mine, or any other, an *unprovoked* attack: he, surely, had reason to expect that he should not escape with impunity, but that they would go forth and seek a foe; who, *assuming the form of an angel of light*, had deceived

\* Vind. p. 4.

† Remarks on Mr. Hume's Essay on the Natural History of Religion, p. 12.

‡ Vind. p. 3.

even some of the guards, and *deluded an easy public*, until the spear of truth touched him to the quick, and forced him to throw off his disguise.

This defence \*I might urge for my acrimony of stile, as our Author terms it; and to the public perhaps it may be in some degree necessary. With respect to Mr. Gibbon himself, I may challenge him to produce from my *Examination* more illiberal and personal expressions or reflections, than such as frequently occur in his mild *Vindication*; and, since he complains so much on this head, it should seem that it became him to set an example of the moderation which he commends \*.

There is another, and that a prudential, reason, why this would have been proper. The countryman who was present at an academical disputation, though he did not understand the learned language it was held in, had yet good reason for saying that he could be certain one of the disputants thought himself in the wrong, because he had worked himself up into all the emotions of passion, and discovered all the impatience of anger. Had Mr. Gibbon answered my *Examination* without expressing so much peevishness and resentment; his readers in general would have been less disposed to believe that many of my charges affected him deeply. But from the high tone of anger in which he inveighs against me and my associates, many will be apt to suspect that he was stung with the truth of my accusation. It was far from being my design to enrage him to such a degree; I contended only with the *historian*, and am sorry to have touched him so sensibly as it seems I have done, in his private character of a *gentleman*.

\* See *Vindication*, p. 6. 8. 16. 41. 57. 91, &c. &c.

I will

I will endeavour therefore, for my own sake as well as my adversary's, to preserve my temper, and refrain from those mean invectives which disgrace his *Vindication*; and for which the inevitable tendency of dispute, which he pleads, will not sufficiently apologise. Not that I mean to give up the truth of my argument through undue complaisance; but while I confute his assertions, I shall forbear the most distant *personal* allusion.

In justice to the artful mode of his *Vindication*, I am bound to return his compliment with increase; for "it is contrived with *more than tolerable* skill to confound the ignorance and candour of his readers\*." He has taken many months to consider of the defence which he might most securely adopt; and though he has doubtless pointed out *some* false charges, he frequently flies off from the first question, and employs much art and evasion to draw off the attention of the reader from the material point in debate, to which he knows he cannot give a satisfactory reply, to less important circumstances, in which he can shew his adversary was mistaken. This is always the sign of a bad cause. A skilful advocate, who knows the merits are against his client, ever endeavours to keep the principal object from the observation of the court; and if the opposite side, with all the superiority of law and equity, have unfortunately committed some little irregularity in their proceedings, or failed in proving some subordinate matters, inadvertently brought forward in the cause; by expatiating on these, and exaggerating their importance with pomp of words and confidence of assertion, he hopes to confound the

\* Vind. p. 7.

jury and obtain a verdict. But the discerning arbiter sees through such flimsy artifices of sophistry, which may shew the abilities of the pleader, but cannot alter the foundations of the cause. Such most certainly has been Mr. Gibbon's mode of vindicating himself. He is ever endeavouring at plausible glosses, but he carefully avoids attempting to shake the foundation of the charge; and, not ignorant of the favour and admiration with which his style has been received by many, he aims at amusing the ear without convincing the understanding, and substitutes sophistry instead of argument.

It must be confessed, that he displays a degree of modesty in the title of his *Vindication*, which it seems is confined to *some* passages only; and we might have hoped it proceeded from a consciousness of his not being able to refute *all* the charges brought against him, and from a conviction of his errors; if he had not asserted that "the few imputations which he has neglected are still more palpably false, or still more evidently trifling\*." To this affectation of sparing me, I shall only say, that my opponent does not indicate the most forgiving temper; on the contrary, his implacable resentment gives me reason to imagine that he was not merciful in a single instance where he discovered an error. He had time to sift thoroughly every particular, and that he condescended to be sufficiently minute, the course of this *Reply* will abundantly prove. I shall therefore take it for granted that the numerous imputations which Mr. G. affects to have neglected as false or trifling, he found so strongly supported, that all the powers of his eloquence could not

\* Wind. p. 96.

weaken

weaken their force. As my adversary has artfully kept these from sight, it is my business to bring them forward, that the reader may be sensible of their number and importance.

This advocate for infidelity forgets, it should seem, how greatly the bias of principle will affect the judgment; and he is not the first author, even of great character, who has perverted, either purposely or undesignedly, the testimony of authors, ancient as well as modern, to satisfy a groundless antipathy against the doctrines and professors of Christianity. Modern infidels and sceptics, when driven from the possibility of deceiving by conclusions more specious than true, or disguising sacred truths by the fallies of indecent wit and pleasantry, have often judged it expedient to have recourse to the pretended sanction of history †.

The

† The Learned Dr. *Burgh* has marked out (in his *Inquiry into the Belief of the Christians of the three first centuries*) this peculiar conduct in some of our modern historians. Our author is one of them; and though he did not think proper to encounter this able champion, among those whom “*he has saluted with stern defiance, or gentle courtesy*,” (*Vind.* p. 91.) I shall produce his words, as those of a layman, for a proof that “the obnoxious part of Mr. G.’s history does not provoke the zeal of those *only* who consider themselves as watchmen of the Holy City.”

“Whatever occurs, says Dr. *Burgh*, in the antient writers of history, of a speculative nature, we find to be an inference from a fact stated, without any seeming view to the deduction, but to the unadulterated representation of which the historian appears to have religiously attended. Whatever occurs in the modern writers of history of a narrative nature, we find to be an inference from a system previously assumed, without any seeming view to the truths of the fact recorded, but to the establishment of which the historian appears, *through every species of misrepresentation*, to have zealously directed his force. The late Mr. *Hume*, for instance, converted the history of this nation into a defence of the Stuarts’ principles of government: to this end he has adduced facts only



The plausibility of their practice seems to have prevailed with Mr. Gibbon; but I do not see why he should be quite so positive and dogmatical: for matters of fact are stubborn, and not easily made to bend even by the power of his rhetoric. In the fabulous ages of antiquity, woods and rocks were said to have been moved by the harmony of an Orpheus or an Amphion; in other words, the Poet or Historian had a licence of representing facts as it suited their purpose, or pleased their imagination. We now require proofs to authenticate assertions, and something more in-

only as arguments, has warped the train of events from the real course of succession, and, in order to render them subservient to his predetermined conclusion, has bestowed on each that false colouring which may give it, in some degree, the appearance of a case in point. A similar plan has been since pursued; and as the subversion of freedom was the evident purpose of Mr. Hume in writing *the History of England*, so, I fear, we may with too much justice affirm the subversion of Christianity to be the object of Mr. Gibbon in writing *the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. As a narrative founded on the authority of ancient writers must have defeated his end, it is curious to observe the subtlety and variety of those artifices with which this gentleman has endeavoured to work away their credit, and thus to obtain a favourable reception for his own *substituted conjectures*, as a superior ground of history.

To one alone I shall now advert, because it has been directed against the veracity of that Father who is immediately under my consideration (Justin Martyr). It is briefly this: When an ancient, and particularly a Christian writer, makes an assertion, the admission of which might be found inconsistent with Mr. Gibbon's hypothesis, he feigns a position which may shake the faith of his reader, and, ascribing this to the author from whose pen it never flowed, descants on his credulity, and inculcates the necessity of standing on our guard against the danger of too implicit confidence in one at the least liable to imposition, and whose authority is therefore not sufficient to remove the perplexities thus introduced into the sceptical mind." *Inquiry*, p. 70, 8vo. Lond. 1778.

fallible

fallible than the melody of a well-rounded period.

“The Historian of the Roman Empire” might with a hope of security play his popular reputation against the character of a Bachelor of Arts; but when several agree in their testimony, of whom all are not so ignorant of history as he would represent them, and give evident proofs of his *Misrepresentations* and *Plagiarism*; there are some in the world who will be apt to conclude, perhaps not without reason, that this concurring evidence must overbalance the haughty and peremptory assertions even of our learned Author.

I lament no less than Mr. Gibbon, that in the prosecution of this *Reply*, I must be obliged to repeat often what he calls “*the vainest and most disgusting of the pronouns* †:” having not the least pretensions to the high-sounding title of *the Historian of the Roman Empire*, which serves to supply with honourable pomp (I presume not to say with how much justice) the name of my adversary. Let him consider what the appellation implies, and discharge his duty accordingly. It was formerly said, “an Historian should be of no country:” it is equally necessary that he should be fair and impartial, and without bias or prejudice in matters of religion.

Surely it was policy in Mr. Gibbon, after such positive assertions of his own innocence, and that the accusations of his adversaries were calumnious and groundless, to disclaim *for ever* the odious controversy. I might press him to give substantial reasons for this resolution; the cause of truth is ever to be defended, and will sustain unshaken the most impetuous attacks of its enemies. Fal-

† Vind. p. 8.

lacy and artifice alone decline the fair and open trial, and dread the event of a minute scrutiny.

Mr. Gibbon therefore must not think it unreasonable that I, in my turn, should make my defence, and confirm my former charges.

### *Quotations in general.*

The first point which Mr. Gibbon attempts to defend is his mode of quotation, his loose way of reference, which I had represented as “a good artifice to escape detection; a policy not without its design and use; as, by endeavouring to deprive us of the means of comparing him with the authorities he cites, he flattered himself, no doubt, that he might safely have recourse to misrepresentation\*.”

The historian is not a little piqued that I should derogate from his industry and labour, in illustrating his fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, with 383 notes. Does he think that their merit is to be estimated by their number alone? Is no attention to be paid to the contents of them? Are we not to consider whether they are sufficient to establish the points for which they are adduced? If all were taken away that are false, and all that are unnecessarily thrown in, to swell them out, it would reduce their formidable bulk; and they would appear naked indeed, as well as loose and general in their reference.

I doubt much whether he has succeeded in his attempt to confute this part of the charge: he has indeed drawn up five reasons to account for the acknowledged nakedness of a few notes; and says, “he is persuaded, that if the examples, in which

\* Introduction to Exam. p. 2.

“ he

“ he has occasionally deviated from his ordinary practice, were specified and examined, they might always be fairly attributed to some one of them \*.

To this assertion I must give a positive denial; and as this is one instance on which he seems willing “ to stake my credit, and his own, and the merits of our cause, at least, of our characters †,” I shall the more readily appeal to the judgment of the public, with a resolution not to be daunted by severity of language.

My animadversion was directed against the *Quality*, *Contents*, or *Occasion* of his unsupported notes; not the number, quantity, or bulk of them: It did not relate to his *general practice*; but I saw plainly that whenever his inclination led him to extend or contract the sense of an author; whenever he was willing to throw out an insinuation against religion, which would appear more graceful when supported by some testimony; he quoted the author or the book at large, and occasionally laid aside the boasted claim to accuracy and minuteness of distinction. For it is remarkable, though the two chapters are nearly of a size, and the number of the notes not very different, that there should be so many general references in the fifteenth more than there are in the sixteenth chapter. But the reason is obvious; as the former contains the more direct attack on the doctrines and professors of Christianity, he was not compelled to have much recourse to this artful mode in the latter.

I shall not, however, rest satisfied with this general explanation. As Mr. Gibbon insists so much on this matter, “ I will meet him on the hard

\* Vind. p. 11, 12, 13, 14.

† Vind. p. 12.

“ ground

“ ground of controversy \* ;” and condescend to a minuteness, which might otherwise be neglected, by bringing to view some of the instances of his loose and general references, in order to prove my assertion.

He says, that “ Erasmus removes the difficulty  
 “ (of the Millenarian doctrine, and of the ap-  
 “ proaching end of the world,) by the help of  
 “ allegory and metaphor: and that the learned  
 “ Grotius ventures to insinuate that, for wise  
 “ purposes, the pious deception was permitted to  
 “ take place †. The xxivth chapter of St. Mat-  
 “ thew and the 2d epistle of St. Paul to the Thes-  
 “ salonians, are cited.” And Mr. Gibbon *now*  
 tells us, that “ his reader is guided by the refe-  
 “ rence to the proper spot in the commentaries of  
 “ Grotius, &c. by the more accurate citation of  
 “ the original author; the form of the composi-  
 “ tion supplying the want of a local reference ‡.”  
 But this reference discovers nothing similar in *Gro-  
 tius*, the passage alluded to, (which however does  
 not come up to his purpose) being elsewhere, as I  
 have shewn in my Examination §: and even in  
*Erasmus* a better reference is necessary, as the only  
 words there at all near to his purpose seem not to  
 be qualified either by allegory or metaphor ||.

\* Vind. p. 67.

† Note 59th, chap. xv. My references answer to the *second*  
 edition of Mr. Gibbon's History:

‡ Vind. p. 14.

§ Exam. p. 91.

|| Η γένεα αὐτῶν. Illud obiter annotandum, γένεα apud  
 Græcos aliquoties, non pro ipsa *natione*, seu *gente*, sed pro eo,  
 quod Latini nunc *ætatem* vocant, nunc *memoriam*, nonnun-  
 quam et *seculum*. Unde Nestor τρεῖς γένεας vixisse legitur,  
 quod tres hominum ætates duraverat. Ad eum modum vide-  
 tur hoc accipi loco. *Erasmi*. in Matt. xxiv. 39. Ed. fol.  
 Lugd. Batav. 1705.

In

In the 65th note, he refers us to the whole works of Sulpicius Severus, (Abauzit giving him no better direction) to find out his complaint, "that the sentence of the council of Laodicea had been ratified by the *greater* number of Christians of his time;" and, without any corroborating testimony, assigns as a reason for the reception of the Apocalypse in the Greek church, that they "were subdued by the authority of an impostor, who, in the sixth century, assumed the character of Dionysius the Areopagite."

In the 68th, he roundly asserts, unsupported by authority, "Whatever may be the language of individuals, yet *the condemnation of the wisest, and most virtuous of the Pagans* is still the public doctrine of all the Christian churches; That, the Jansenists, who have so diligently studied the works of the Fathers, maintain this sentiment with distinguished zeal; and, That the learned M. de Tillemont never dismisses a virtuous Emperor without pronouncing his damnation."

Mr. Gibbon owns that "there are *rare* instances of quotations which he has adopted, expressed with less accuracy than he could have wished \*." I agree with him as to the inaccuracy, but not to their being *rare*. They will surely be best accounted for by throwing the blame on the modern author, whom he transcribed, for not being more minute in his citation, but unfortunately they prove, at the same time, that Mr. G. did not himself consult the original.

At the 69th note he says, in general terms, that "Justin and Clemens of Alexandria allow that some of the philosophers were instructed by the Logos."

\* Vind. p. 13.

In the 89th, he quotes the whole volumes of Justin, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustin, "for their opinion as to marriage, and the state of Adam before his fall."

In the 152d, The whole of Abauzit's Discourse on the Apocalypse is cited for the confirmation of a single remark, respecting the Alogians, "who disputed the genuineness of the Apocalypse," &c. But by this general quotation he might hope to conceal his obligation.

In chap. xvi. note 103, Sulpicius Severus is cited at large as being "the first author of the Computation of the ten persecutions."

See also his loose references in chap. xv. notes 8. 14. 22. 31. 32. 61. 71. 79. 85. 98. 102. 103. 124. 135. 139. 142. 149. 155. 168. 177. 180. 193.

Chap. xvi. notes 7. 10. 15.

Had not our author been sensible that this mode of quotation needed some apology, he would not have troubled himself to state five specious reasons to divert the reader from the charge alledged. And though we should admit their validity on some occasions; the *first* of them is at best but a confession of plagiarism; from the *third* he thinks proper to deviate, as we have seen, when it suits his purpose; and the last gives ample liberty to father any opinion on any writer of credit\*.

I cannot therefore look upon these fallacious motives as "innocent;" nor, consequently, "as

\* See the five reasons stated in the *Vindication*, p. 13, 14. The fifth is, "The idea which I was desirous of communicating to the reader, was sometimes the general result of the author or treatise that I had quoted; nor was it possible to confine, within the narrow limits of a particular reference, the sense or spirit which was mingled with the whole mass."

“ laudable \* :” and am of opinion, that if accuracy had not been more regularly practised by other historical writers, they would have small claim to our gratitude or esteem.

### *Errors of the Press.*

I foresaw and anticipated the excuse of which Mr. Gibbon now avails himself; to throw the blame on the corrector of the press.—In some instances this is sufficient †; there will, however, still remain many strong proofs of his inaccuracy and inattention, after we have admitted all his plea. Not but that I am surprised he should rank the mistake of *Idolatria* for *Idololatria* among them, as it often occurs in his history through the several editions. He wishes to persuade his reader, that “ my criticism is never so formidable as when it is directed against the guilty corrector of the press ‡.” Though he would perhaps have felt himself more at ease, had this been true, it is incumbent on me to remind my reader, that I introduced these *inaccuracies* with an apology for the trivial appearance of some of them: and, indeed, I must confess, many of my friends thought me too minute; yet still, though all such be removed, there will remain evident proofs, that had our author consulted the original materials, he would have had more pretensions to his boasted claim of accuracy and diligence.

Out of the *twenty-six* articles of *inaccuracy* which I urged, he has taken no notice of *twelve*; and some of them might call his judgment or his

\* Vind. p. 14.

† The instances are, two in Exam. at p. 150; one at p. 153; and one at p. 154.

‡ Vind. p. 16.



learning in question. Such as his quoting one book of Philo for another\*—citing the *Benedictine* edition of Chrysostom, when his reference agreed only to the *Savil* edition†—misquoting and extenuating the words of Theodorus Metochita from Valefius's Annotations on Eusebius‡—and, above all, his citing the Theodosian code, lib. 1. tit. 1. 1. 3. for a law contained in the xvith book §.

Now, until he had cleared up this matter, he had little reason to be severe with me, because I hastily quoted the *Theodosian* code for a law contained in the *Justinian* ||: he might have been contented to compromise our mutual inadvertency on this head. Surely an indulgent public will allow a young man to make this plea, when the deeply-read and learned historian condescends to avail himself of the pretext.

For my part, I had been citing the *Theodosian* code, and went from thence to the *Justinian*: and by omitting to alter the title in my papers, I made the mistake. One thing, at least, is manifest, that I *did* turn over the *Justinian*, as well as the *Theodosian* code, and did discover the law to which Mr. G. alluded, without the guidance of his reference, in spite of my ignorance of Roman jurisprudence\*\*. But on the contrary, the Historian of the Roman empire *borrow*s this rescript from the respectable authority of the *modern* Paolo; and is mistaken in quoting the very first title of the first book of the *Theodosian* code.

But another error is alleged against me. In

\* Note 127, c. xv. Exam. p. 145.

† Note 157, c. xv.

‡ Note 181, c. xvi. Exam. p. 147, 148.

§ Note 142. c. xvi.

|| Vind. p. 15.

\*\* Exam. p. 230.

transcribing from our Author, I had inaccurately wrote a declaration of *an* old law, instead of *the* old law. I lament my inaccuracy, and ask his pardon. Yet perhaps it is not quite so important as an alteration of the same particle, which he has made in my *Examination*. I had animadverted on his saying, that, “ *In the various compilations of the Augustan history, there are not six lines which relate to the Christians* \* ;” and told him, that, “ his false assertion was overthrown by the frequent notice taken of them in *several* passages of that history, which he himself had occasion to cite † .” He now puts an ample concession in my mouth, and makes me own that “ he has occasionally produced *the* several passages of the Augustan history which relate to the Christians ‡ .” The sense of my passage is not a little changed and enlarged by the insertion of the small but emphatic particle. Having perused the compilations of Lardner on this point, I am convinced that the learning of Mr. Gibbon is impeached by the latter as well as the former declaration, in respect to the subject of it. And though *I did not fiercely contend as to the quantity or number of the lines* ; I am afraid his veracity is somewhat interested in the alteration which he has made.

### *Difference of Editions.*

Mr. Gibbon attempts to account for other instances of *misrepresentation*, by imputing them to

\* Note 24, c. xvi. Mr. G. seems to have had an eye to the remark of Mr. Moyle, though he has rather enlarged the sense of it.—“ They,” says he (speaking of the Christians) “ are *never once mentioned* with reproach by *Dio*, or the six writers of the *Historia Augusta*.”

“ *Dio*, and the six writers of the *Historia Augusta*, scarce name them at all.” Moyle’s Works, vol. ii. p. 222. 304.

† Exam. p. 83, 84.

‡ Vind. p. 57.

the *difference of editions* \*. This excuse will certainly take away some of the *inaccuracies of reference*, with which I charged him † ; and *one* instance of misrepresentation in *Optatus*, which I had urged in an improper sense of the word ‡. But I confess it is the first time I ever knew, that *editors* had the presumption to alter and correct the text of their authors ; to insert, or take away matters of fact. And unless *Dupin* and Bishop *Fell* assumed this strange power, I may venture to assert, that if our Historian did consult the originals, he has amazingly perverted them.

In the instance adduced from *Dupin*, the difference of edition does, indeed, correct the charge of inaccuracy of reference. But what is most important, the *misrepresentation* which I discovered cannot be invalidated by this frivolous excuse. It appears in another page, forcibly condemning his groundless assertion. Mr. G. must allow that I marked out the proper passages alluded to by him in the 8th canon of the council of Ancyra and Neo-cesarea, and the first of Elvira, &c. §. Surely, then, he will no longer say, that the difference of a page will wipe away the stain, and remove all that I advanced against him ||.

Far be it from me to assert that he did not consult *Dupin in the original* ; I supposed him to be so well versed in the *Bibliothèque*, that I ranked its author among those to whom he had particular obligations \*\*. But it is one thing to read a writer,

\* Vind. p. 16.

† For instance, one of *Dupin*, Exam. p. 148 ; one of *Optatus*, Exam. p. 151 ; and perhaps those of *Cyprian*.

‡ Exam. p. 73.

§ *Dupin Bibliothèque Ecclesiast.* tom. ii. p. 307. Quarto edit. Paris. 1690.

|| Exam. p. 134.

\*\* Ibid. p. 275.

and

and a very different one to give a fair and impartial account of his words and opinions. He selects *four* instances of particular editions; but for what reason I know not, except, that perhaps those alone afford him any evasion\*. I urged the instances of *Cyprian* and *Optatus* more strongly, because I had reason to imagine that I consulted the very same editions as Mr. Gibbon, which I always endeavoured to do, when directed by his reference. That I did so, he is careful not to deny, but only insinuates the contrary; by saying, "Unless I had consulted the same editions, as well as the same places, it would have been extraordinary if I had succeeded†." He would have acted the part of a more generous adversary, if he had stated two out of the four instances, in such a manner that the reader might perceive that we had consulted the same editors, only there was a republication, elsewhere, of the same edition.

### *Editions consulted*

By Mr. GIBBON.

By DAVIS.

*Optatus Milevitanus*, *Optat. Milev. by Dupin.*  
by *Dupin*. fol. Paris. 1700. fol. Antwerp. 1702.

*Cypriani Opera*. Ed. *Cypriani Opera*, Ed.  
*Fell.* fol. Amsterdam. *Fell.* Oxon. 1682 ‡.  
1700.

\* One of these is the reference to *Shaw's Travels*, which I had myself thought so trifling as to join it, with three more, in one article (xiii. Exam. p. 151.) and in one of them Mr. G. must be wrong.—But so important is this in his eyes, that it makes a distinguished figure in the list of the four authors, in consulting whom we differed in editions.

† Vind. p. 16.

‡ Mr. G. thus states them :

*Mr. GIBBON's Editions.*

*Mr. DAVIS's Editions.*

*Optatus Milevitanus*, by  
*Dupin*, fol. Paris, 1700.

Fol. Antwerp, 1702.

*Cypriani Opera*, edit. *Fell.*  
fol. Amsterdam, 1700.

Most probably Oxon, 1682.

Mr. G. did not before tell me he meant Fell's edition of Cyprian, published at *Amsterdam*, but, in general terms, *Fell's edition of Cyprian*. If it had not been his design to keep this back from the reader's eye, why should he say, "*most probably Oxon,*" when I had expressly said that I quoted *Fell's Oxford edition* \*; and that some of his references agreed therewith.

### *General Charge of MISREPRESENTATION.*

To support this, I have alleged nearly *seventy* instances. How much reason I have to maintain my ground will instantly be seen, by observing, that to *fifty* of these my adversary has made no reply that can possibly be admitted. The remaining number may be reduced under two classes:

1st. Those in which I have been mistaken.

2dly. Those which in substance are just; though erroneous in some circumstances of less importance.

### FIRST CLASS.

This will comprise but a few; and in considering the other division, the artifices made use of in the *Vindication* to remove these stubborn difficulties, will appear to my reader to be worthy observation, as they increase and vary almost with every instance.

\* Exam. p. 155. I have, in vain, consulted many of the best libraries of Oxford and London for Fell's *Amsterdam* edition of *Cyprian*; but I shall rather give up the instances of inaccuracy, than condescend to accept of Mr. G's illiberal offer of his *servant* "to shew me his library; if I will take the trouble of calling at his house any afternoon when he is *not* at home." *Vind.* p. 91.

PAGE.

## PAGI.

I. The instance from *Pagi* must be given up entirely; as I had inaccurately cited Baronius\*, without examining the corrections of this Chronologist, which our author has stated †.

## MOSHEIM.

II. My assertion that, “ Mr. Gibbon’s reference  
 “ to *Mosheim*’s history, does not lead us to discover  
 “ the name of Valeria ‡,” was owing to my not  
 having read to the end of the section, which happened to be a very long one. But I must still object to Mr. G.’s remark on the occasion: that  
 “ Christianity has in every age acknowledged it’s  
 “ important obligations to female devotion §.”  
 From such a quarter, we could not mistake the sneer; it is of a stamp with what our author elsewhere says; “ After the example of their divine master,  
 “ the missionaries of the Gospel addressed themselves to men, and especially to women oppressed by the consciousness, and very often by  
 “ the effects of their vices ||: and that the obscure  
 “ teachers of Christianity——cautiously avoid the  
 “ dangerous encounter of philosophers——and insinuate themselves into those minds, whom their  
 “ age, *their sex*, and their education, has the best  
 “ disposed to receive the impression of superstitious terrors \*\*.”

\* Exam. p. 140.

† Vind. p. 77—80.

‡ Exam. p. 132.

§ Decline and Fall, p. 564.

|| Ibid. p. 480. See also Dr. Watson’s Apology.

\*\* History, p. 514.

But Mr. Gibbon affects to be serious, and pretends that I myself meant to speak slightly of female devotion. Observe what an *honest* artifice he is compelled to adopt, in order to give it an air of probability. He takes away the period at the end of my sentence, and connects my words with his own, leaving only a semicolon; thus: "Christianity has, in every age, acknowledged its important obligations to *female* devotion; the remark is truly *contemptible* \*."

The equivocating insinuation of my Adversary, perhaps the happiest he ever hit upon, that "some advocates would disgrace Christianity, if *Christianity could be disgraced*;" at once proves that his manner of defending its cause, indicates no good intention on his part.

His criticism with respect to the word *initata* will surely be admitted by me on the authority of *Bingham* †: I shall therefore retract the charge of *unjustifiable assertion*; and content myself with saying, that Mr. Gibbon differs from Mosheim in his opinion.

### OPTATUS.

III. By the difference of editions, the charge relating to a passage in *Optatus* is removed ‡.

\* Vind. p. 74. In my Examination it was thus written: (p. 132.) "Much less does the Christian Mosheim give our infidel Historian any pretext for inserting that illiberal malignant insinuation, "*Christianity has, in every age, acknowledged its important obligations to FEMALE devotion.*" The remark is truly *contemptible*."

† Vind. p. 72 — 75.

‡ Exam. p. 73.

### TERTULLIAN.

## TERTULLIAN. LE CLERC.

IV. and V. The first instance brought from *Tertullian*\*, and one from *Le Clerc*, must be yielded to his pleading inaccuracy of reference †; but little apology will suffice for mistakes into which I was unavoidably led by giving too much credit to Mr. Gibbon's boasted claim.

## MOSHEIM.

VI. His mode of invalidating another instance from *Mosheim*, respecting the progress of the Gospel, is very remarkable. I had confined myself to an assertion in a particular sentence of his history ‡, and had reason to expect that his note was designed to justify it. But the Proteus here escapes me; for, in his *Vindication* ||, he takes in more of his text, produces fresh authority, and, having altered the ground of controversy, is enabled by this reinforcement to repel the attack.

## DION CASSIUS.

VII. He tries to evade one instance urged from Dion Cassius, respecting the Jews "discovering a

\* Exam. p. 25. Vind. p. 29.

† Ibid. p. 19. Vind. p. 30.

‡ The following was the sentence cited in my Examination: "It will still remain an undoubted fact, that the barbarians of Scythia and Germany, who subverted the Roman monarchy, were involved in the darkness of Paganism; and that even the conversion of Iberia, of Armenia, or of Ethiopia, was not attempted with any degree of success, till the scepter was in the hands of an orthodox emperor." Gibbon's Hist. p. 512. Exam. p. 126, 127.

|| Vind. p. 66.

" fierce



“ fierce impatience of the dominion of Rome,” by asserting that “ his citation related only to the “ note\*.” If this plea be allowed, we must acquit him. But is it not an odd way, to bring a note, which any one would think was meant to confirm the text, whilst the authority cited relates only to the contents of the note? The former, therefore, remains still to be proved: and if this was the intent of adding notes to his two chapters, it is to little purpose that he boasts of “ illustrating “ them with three hundred and eighty-three “ notes.”

VIII. The other from Dion is attempted to be removed by a combination of two notes. In the one which I censured, he had said, “ Nor has the “ diligence of Xiphilin discovered the name of “ Christians in the large history of Dion Cassius†.” With this alone I was concerned; but Mr. G. having added in a different note, that “ *it was* “ *Dion Cassius, or rather his abbreviator, Xiphilin‡;*” he avails himself of the equivocation. It is at best a point in debate whether the passage in which the name of *Christians* appears, is Dion’s; but as he produces the authority of *Lardner*, for supposing it to be the insertion of *Xiphilin* §, I shall not be peremptory in this charge; only let it be remembered, that *Lardner* himself allows that “ the “ sense may be *Dion’s* ||.”

\* Vind. p. 54. Exam. p. 11.

† Note 24, c. xvi. Exam. p. 83.

‡ Note 106. c. xvi.

§ Vind. p. 55—57.

|| His words are, “ However the sense may be Dion’s. “ But I wish, we had also his stile, without any adulteration.” &c. *Heathen Testimonies. On Dion Cassius*, vol. iii. p. 58.

## SECOND

## SECOND CLASS.

The instances produced under the first class, I have admitted as errors, though they chiefly arose from our author's inaccuracy; yet under this head, whatever arts he may have used to mislead the reader's attention, the following instances will prove that I have supported the main intent for which they were advanced.

## TERTULLIAN.

I. By the artful connection of *Tertullian's* expression, "*Qui primus hic gladium in nos egit,*" with the account of the Scyllitan martyrs from *Ruinart*; Mr. Gibbon has endeavoured to destroy another charge of misquoting that Father\*. Should we allow this combination to be just, and a sufficient proof that "*martyrdoms* were lately introduced into *Africa*;" yet our Author's assertion was, that "we cannot discover any assured traces of *faith* as well as *persecution*†." Can He deny, that the establishment and progress of Christianity, previous to that period, is vouched by *Tertullian*? and must not *faith*, in the nature of things, have preceded *persecution*? I had allowed that other authors cited by Mr. Gibbon countenance his opinion, that *it was late before the Roman missionaries passed either the sea or the Alps*;" &c. and my censure was confined to his crowding in *Tertullian* among them. But we shall hereafter see that this strange connection of authorities is a new mode invented by our Historian of confirming historical facts.

\* Vind. p. 32.

† History, l. xv. p. 510. Exam. p. 35, 36.

PRUDENTIUS.

## PRUDENTIUS.

II. In the instance from *Prudentius*, cited by me only as an *Inaccuracy*, and ranked in that class, I expressed my surprise, that Mr. Gibbon should single out that particular line; “Nec minus involatat terris, nec ab hoc recedit orbe:” and allowed that Cyprian was spoken of in the hymn, as a great teacher\*. Therefore, before Mr. G. lengthened the quotation, my censure was justifiable†.

## JEROME.

III. In the passage from *Jerome* I undoubtedly inserted the Greek translation of the Latin words “*de magistrum* ‡.” But how does it appear from thence that I had quoted them as the *original words of Cyprian*? I must therefore beg some better proof than Mr. Gibbon’s bare assertion, that I was guilty of this *ridiculous pedantry* §.

## JUSTIN MARTYR.

IV. In the class of those instances, in which though I have been mistaken in some points, the force of my argument still prevails; is the following one from *Justin Martyr*.

Our Historian had asserted, “that a modern inquisitor would hear with surprise, that whenever an information was given to a Roman magistrate, of any person within his jurisdiction who had embraced the sect of the Christians, the charge was committed to the party accused,

\* Exam. p. 144, 145.

† Exam. p. 145.

‡ Vind. p. 34.

§ Vind. p. 33.

“ and

“ and that a convenient time was allowed him  
 “ to settle his domestic concerns, and to prepare  
 “ an answer to the crime that was imputed to  
 “ him \*.”

He appeals to “ the second apology of Justin  
 “ for a particular and very curious instance of this  
 “ legal delay †.” I affirmed in my Examination ‡, that “ the following instance is the only  
 “ one that bears the most distant similitude.” So  
 far I was in the right: but in stating the fact I  
 had not given it its full force. For though I now  
 see that in the case of the woman herself, she  
 sued for this delay, and it was granted her: (I  
 trust the candour of the public will credit my so-  
 lemn declaration that the omission of the circum-  
 stance was the consequence of undue precipita-  
 tion alone:) yet the case itself proves nothing to  
 the general practice. For it is plain from this  
 very place in Justin, “ that *Ptolemy* had no time in-  
 “ dulged him; he was only asked *whether he was a*  
 “ *Christian?* and on his confession, was ordered for  
 “ punishment §. And one named *Lucius*, also, re-  
 “ proving the judge (*Urbicus*) for the unjust sen-  
 “ tence pronounced on a person guilty of no other  
 “ crime but that of *being called a Christian*, was  
 “ ordered for execution; the judge only replying,  
 “ and you also appear to be one of that sect: and a  
 “ third was condemned in the same manner \*\*.”

It

\* Hist. p. 553.

† Note 98. c. xvi.

‡ Exam. p. 71.

§ See the Examination, p. 72.

\*\* Καὶ τὸ Οὐρβικὸν κελυσσάντος αὐτὸν ΑΠΙΧΘΗΝΑΙ, Λουκιὸς τις,  
 καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς Χριστιανὸς, ὄρων τὴν ἀλογίαν ἕως γενομένην κρίσιν, πρὸς  
 τοῦ Οὐρβικὸν εἶπεν, τίς ἡ αἰτία τὴν μὴτε μοιχοῦ ——— μὴτε ἀρπαγῆ,  
 μὴτε ἀπλῶς ἀδικήματι τι πρᾶξαντα ἐλεγχόμενον, ὀνόματος δὲ Χρι-  
 στιανὸς προσωνυμίαν ὁμολογῶντα τὸν ἀνδρῶπον τῷτον ἐκόμισεν; ———  
 καὶ ὅς, εἶδεν ἄλλο ἀποκρινάμενος, καὶ πρὸς τὸν Λαρκίον εἶπεν, δοκεῖς μοι  
 καὶ σὺ εἶναι τοιοῦτος. καὶ τὸ Λαρκίον φησάντος, Μαλίστα, πάλιν καὶ  
 αὐτὸν

It shews great ingenuity in Mr. Gibbon, so opportunely to introduce this pompous description of the *mildness* of the Roman magistrates, that he might confirm it by a *curious instance of legal delay*; selected from an apology of Justin, in which he states the case of three martyrs to whom *no* delay was granted; and expresses his own imminent danger of meeting the same treatment from the *humane* magistrate Crescens \*.

### IGNATIUS.

V. Unfortunately, in my *Examination*, I asserted too peremptorily, that there was no passage in the epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrneans, which bore the least affinity to our Historian's assertion, that "the Father employed a vague and doubtful tradition, instead of quoting the certain testimony of the Evangelists †."

Mr. Gibbon here triumphs over my ignorance and inadvertency ‡; but the passage which escaped my notice was pointed out by Dr. Chelsum §, before the *Vindication* was published. I easily perceived the intent of Mr. Gibbon in introducing the remark; though, having used a different edition of Ignatius, I could not discover the passage; which

αὐτοὺς ΑΠΑΧΘΗΝΑΙ ἐκέλευσεν.—ἄλλος δὲ τρίτος ἐπιλθὼν, κολασθῆναι προσετιμῆθη Justin Martyr, Apolog. secunda, p. 90. ed. Benedic. 1742.

It is remarkable, that ἀπαχθῆναι is the very word used by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles (c. xii. 19.) when he relates Herod's command, that the soldiers who were appointed to guard St. Peter, when the angel delivered him out of prison, *should be put to death*.

\* Καὶ γὰρ ἐν προσδοκῇ ὑπὸ τινος τῶν νομομασιῶν ἐπιβιβασθῆναι, καὶ ζυγῷ ἐμπαρῆναι. Apolog. ii. § 3.

† Hist. note 34. c. xv. Exam. p. 100.

‡ Vind. p. 60—63.

§ Remarks, p. 42—48. second edit.

is however, far from being very clear. And I might perhaps assert, with some degree of probability, that he did not himself discover from the *original words* of Ignatius, that the Father *intended* to *employ a vague and doubtful tradition*; but having first met with the observation, was guided by the learning of others to the passage in the epistle which occasioned it. For in his *Vindication* he goes through a series of arguments, adopted by his modern assistants, before he comes to the conclusion drawn from it in his history. But if the passage was too deep for my penetration, our Historian has made but an indifferent use of it when he discovered it. For I now have before me the very edition he quotes, and am astonished to find that he should give us an interpretation so wide from the sense of the original.

The words are Εγω γαρ και μετα αναστασιν εν σαρκι αυτον οίδα, και πιστευω οντα. κ. τ. λ. Thus translated by Cotelerius: "Ego enim & post resurrectionem onem eum in carne novi, & credo esse \*."

Mr. Gibbon might have learnt from his judicious opponent Dr. Chelsum, that the learned Lardner thus renders the passage †: "But I know that after the resurrection he was in the flesh, and I believe him to be so still." Archbishop Wake also translates it thus: "But I know that *even* after his resurrection he was in the flesh, and I believe that he is still so ‡." Yet Mr. Gibbon has thought proper to translate it—"I have known, and I believe, that after his resurrection likewise he existed in the flesh §."

\* Ep. ad Smyrn. Patr. Apostol. tom. ii. p. 34. ed. Coteler. Clericus. 1724.

† Remarks, p. 44, 45, second edition.

‡ Wake's Genuine Epistles of the Fathers, p. 115. 8vo ed.

§ Vind. p. 61.

Am

Am I to suppose him ignorant of the Greek and Latin languages? or, does he wilfully misinterpret, and alter the punctuation of the sentence \*? Does he not know that οἶδα, though a perfect tense, has a *present* signification; as well as *novi*? And that οὐτα is a *present* participle, and can by no means be translated *existed*: surely no scholar would render it in a past tense.

Let us now pass on from this false or ignorant translation to the matter in dispute, whether “ Ignatius employed a *vague and doubtful tradition*, “ instead of quoting the certain testimony of the “ Evangelists † ?” This point having been discussed by Dr. Chelsum, who had accurately collected the various opinions of the learned respecting it; it is surprising Mr. Gibbon should again insist on the matter; especially as the Doctor, shewing himself the fair advocate of truth, has even put into his hands most of the arguments by which he now defends himself.

But as Mr. Gibbon says, “ he embraces the “ rational sentiment of *Causabon* and *Pearson* ‡;” and quotes *some* of their words, it will be necessary to tell the reader what *they* mean by the phrase “ *unwritten tradition* :” for Mr. G. is not always free from “ the bad habit,” with which he charges me, “ of greedily snapping at the first words of a reference, without giving himself the trouble of “ going to the end of the page or paragraph §.”

The sentence quoted by our author is to be found in *Pearson*, as the opinion of *Causabon*, ap-

\* Mr. G. thus points the sentence—Εγω γαρ και μετα την αναστασιν ει σμερει αυτον οίδα και πρισυν ουτα, και οτι κ. τ. λ. carrying on the sense through the whole passage.

† Hist. note 34. c. xv.

‡ Vind. p. 63.

§ Ibid. p. 74.

proved of by the Bishop. “ Præterea iterum ob-  
 “ servandum est, quod de hac re scripsit Isaacus  
 “ Causabonus, *Quinetiam fortasse verius, non ex*  
 “ *Evangelio Hebraico, Ignatium illa verba descrip-*  
 “ *sisse, verum traditionem allegasse non scriptam, quæ*  
 “ *postea in literas fuerit relata, et Hebraico Evan-*  
 “ *gelio, quod Matthæo tribuebant, inserta. Et hoc*  
 “ *quidem mihi multo verisimilius videtur :*” But  
 it should be observed, that the Bishop afterwards  
 explains his meaning, thus: “ Multa sane Christi  
 “ dicta in ore vetustissimorum Christianorum fue-  
 “ runt, quæ in Evangeliiis nostris non reperiuntur,  
 “ neque in aliis ullis fortasse unquam scripta sunt.  
 “ — *Quidni pariter & S. Ignatius, qui, cum Apostolis*  
 “ *& eorum discipulis versatus est, præsertim eo tem-*  
 “ *pore quo scriptis Evangeliiis uti fortè ei jam victo*  
 “ *non licebat, eandem historiam, quam narrat S.*  
 “ *Lucas, aliis verbis explicaret \* ?*”

I shall therefore repeat to Mr. Gibbon, that so  
 far is Bishop Pearson from considering these words  
 as a *vague and doubtful tradition*, or *taken out of*  
*the spurious Hebrew gospel*, that it is his opinion,  
*Ignatius alludes to and intended to quote the certain*  
*testimony of the Evangelist*: that is, he related  
 in different words the same part of history recorded  
 by St. Luke, but being in prison, and probably  
 not having the Gospels before him, he could not  
 cite them otherwise than by memory.

It also seems strange that he should as-  
 sert in his *Vindication*, that “ neither of the  
 “ Gospels of St. Luke and St. John contain the  
 “ characteristic words *εν δαιμονιον σωματος*, and  
 “ the important circumstance that either Peter, or  
 “ those who were with Peter, touched the body

\* Pearson *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, part ii. c. ix. p. 396, in  
 tom. ii. *Patr. Apostol.* ed. Coteler. Clericus. 1724.



“ of Christ, and believed \*.” For Dr. Chelsum had quoted the authority of learned men to corroborate the opinion, that the words were synonymous, and cited the verses of the Gospel *where words exactly of the same import occur*: “ Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. *Handle me and see*, for a spirit has not flesh and bones, as ye see me have †.”

It is to be feared that our Historian has not paid a proper attention to the contents of the sacred volume in general, as well as to this passage in particular. But when the analogy was pointed out, he ought not to have repeated an objection which had been confuted.

I shall only add, that this is another proof how stale the objections are which Mr. Gibbon repeats against the Fathers. This was made long since by *Daillé*: to him he was probably indebted for the first thought of it; which we may the more reasonably suppose, as I have shewn in my *Examination*, his obligations to that writer on other points.

Bp. Pearson charges *Daillé* himself with purloining the objection from Jerom ‡: and I am persuaded the reader will be convinced, by a bare comparison of my note annexed, how much our Author is indebted to him ||.

CLEMENS.

\* Vind. p. 62.

† Remarks, p. 45. Luke. c. xxiv. 39.

Ἰδετε τὰς χεῖρας μου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ὅτι αὐτός εἰμι  
 ΠΗΛΑΦΗΣΑΤΕ ΜΕ ΚΑΙ ΙΔΕΤΕ ὅτι πνεῦμα σὰρκα καὶ ὅσα ἐκ  
 ἐχέει καθὼς ἐμε θεωρεῖτε ἔχοντα—ἐπεδείξεν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ  
 τοὺς πόδας. The words of Ignatius are perfectly similar:  
 Πυλαφῆσατε με, καὶ ἰδετε κ. τ. λ.

‡ Pearson, Vind. Ignat. in loc. ante cit.

|| “Sunt etiam in epistolis nonnulla, quæ licet rectam fidem non pudent, aliena tamen videntur vel ab ea reverentia, quæ divinis libris debetur, vel a pietate, vel a veracitate, qua

## CLEMENS.

VI. That I am authorised by learned men to insist on the propriety of calling Clemens *bishop of Rome* from this epistle, without entering into the well known controversy of the difference between the words *Episcopus* or *Bishop*, and *Presbyter*; will appear from Archbishop Wake's genuine *Epistles of the Fathers*.

He says, "Eusebius, Epiphanius, and St. Hierome expressly tell us, that the *Clement* meant by St. Paul was the same that was afterwards *Bishop*

qua hominem Christianum, præsertim vero episcopum, decet. Quale est, quod ex apochryphis quædam furatur, eaque pro veris ac indubitatis ponit; quasi apochryphorum fides certa sit.——

Noster ille epistolicus *Ignatius Dominice* carnis veritatem adversus hæreticos *confirmans*, verba quædam veluti Christi, sic recitat: *Και ὅτε πρὸς τὰς περὶ Πέτρον ἦλθεν, εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Λαβετε, ψυχαφθεσάτε με, καὶ ἴδετε, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμὶ δαίμονιον ἀσωμάτων.* (Ign. ad Smyrn. ed. vetust. Usser. p. 219.)—Jam illam Domini *ῥῆσιν*, "*Non sum demonium incorporeum*:" unde hic scriptor sumpserit, nescire se fatetur Eusebius. (Hist. l. iii. c. 36.)—Hieronymus vero docet unde eam descripserit, "*ex Evangelio* (inquit in lib. de Script. Eccles. in Ignat.) "*quod nuper a me translatus est*;" & alibi diserte testatur, id *Evangelium*, ex quo hæc desumpta sunt, *Hebræum* esse, a *Nazaræis hereticis* olim lectitatum. Id autem evangelium falsum & apochryphum fuisse, & omnes consentiunt, & universæ ecclesiæ fides probat:—Nunc ergo quæro, cur his noster *Ignatius Christi verba*, *veritatis fontes fastidians*, *ex impuris apochryphorum lacunis ficta*, quam vera ex certis, ac divinitus inspiratis libris apud Smyrnæos promovere maluerit? &c. (Dallæus de libris suppositis Ignat. cap. 17, p. 338, 399, 4<sup>o</sup> ed. Genevæ, 1666.)

We cannot deny that Mr. Gibbon has looked over the arguments of the Bishop urged to confute his friend Daillé; (and from them he might perhaps learn, that Jerom mentions a copy of this Hebrew Gospel, which was extant in the library at Cæsarea;) though he has not thought proper to state his conclusions.

of *Rome* \* :” &c. “ But, continues he, whatever he was, or wherever he laboured before, in this I think antiquity is absolutely agreed, that he at last came to be *Bishop of Rome*; and was placed in that See by the express direction of one, or both the apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul †.”

If it be granted that St. *Clement* was not Bishop at the time he wrote this epistle, as some assert; yet this will not prove there were no traces of episcopacy. For though *Wake* observes, that “ St. Clement wrote not this Epistle in his own name, but in the name of the *whole Church of Rome*, to the Corinthians ‡ :” yet he does not draw the inference which Mr. Gibbon insists upon from this circumstance; but says, “ I conclude then that this Epistle was written shortly after the persecution under Nero §, between the 64th and 70th year of Christ. And that, as the learned defender of this period supposes, in the vacancy of the See of *Rome*, before the promotion of St. Clement to the government of it. But of this last circumstance, as there is no certainty, so the express authority of Tertullian ||, that St. Clement was made *Bishop of Rome* by St. Peter; and this delivered as

\* Discourse concerning the several Treatises: ch. ii. of St. Clement's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 6. § 4.

I shall beg leave here to follow Mr. G.'s method of making a figure with the authorities cited by the learned author whom I follow.

Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. iii. c. 12. (c. 16, ed. Reading) Epiph. lib. i. adv. Carpocrat. n. 6. Hieronym. de Script. Eccles. et Comm. in loc. (Esaïam, c. 52, &c.) Item. lib. i. adv. Jovin. Photii Cod. Tem. 113, &c.

† Discourse, &c. ch. ii. sect. 7.

‡ Sect. i. 14, 15.

§ Dodwel. Append. ad cap. vi. Dissert. 2. Cave Hist. Literar. in Clement. p. 18. Compare Dr. Grabe Spicileg. tom. i. p. 255, &c.

|| De Præscript. adv. Hæres. cap. 32.

“ the tradition of the Roman Church in the days  
 “ that he lived, has inclined \* others rather to  
 “ think that he must have been *Bishop* of that  
 “ *Church* when he wrote this Epistle ; though neither  
 “ can this be affirmed as certain and indubitable †.”

That I have put no unusual interpretation on the word *Επισκοπος* in my *Examination* ‡, appears from the translation by this learned prelate.

“ The Apostles have preached to us from our  
 “ Lord Jesus Christ : Jesus Christ from God.  
 “ Christ, therefore, was sent by God ; the Apo-  
 “ stles by Christ : so both were orderly sent ac-  
 “ cording to the will of God. For having re-  
 “ ceived their command,—they went abroad—  
 “ Thus preaching through countries and cities,  
 “ they appointed the first fruits of *their conversions*  
 “ to be *bishops and ministers* over such as should  
 “ afterwards believe, having first proved them by  
 “ the spirit :” &c. §. And again,

“ So likewise our Apostles knew by our Lord  
 “ Christ, that there should contentions arise upon  
 “ the account of *the ministry* :” which word is ren-  
 “ dered more literally in the margin ; “ *about the*  
 “ *name of the bishopric.*”

I must therefore conclude, that *there are traces of an episcopal order in the Epistle of Clement* : nor will Mr. G.’s evasive construction of the word *Bishop*,

\* See Dr. Grabe loc. cit. p. 259.

† Sect. 16, p. 12.

‡ Exam. p. 44, 45.

§ St. Clement’s Epistle to the Corinthians, sect. 42. Vide Cotelier. in loc. This refers us to a passage in Cotelierius, which authorizes my interpretation.—“ Hic insurgunt adversus Ecclesiam novi Aëriani, clamantes agnosci dumtaxat à Clemente duos in Clero ordines, Episcoporum eorumdemque Presbyterorum, & Diaconorum. Ad quos breviter respondeo.” &c. See note p. 171, 172. ed. fol. 1724. See also his *Testimonies of the Ancients* respecting Clemens, p. 128

confounding it with *Presbyter*, even admitting it to be just, give him more of the argument than I shall still have in my favour.

## LACTANTIUS.

VII. My adversary has prudently selected *one* out of the three instances of misrepresentation, which I had produced from Lactantius \*; but he is most unfortunately involved in fresh difficulties, by attempting to extricate himself from the former. I was certainly too hasty, in saying that he asserts the facts on the *sole* authority of Lactantius. The reader who turns to my *Examination* will see, that it was not my design to deny that the Christians received favour from Diocletian, but to censure Mr. G. for appealing to Lactantius on this occasion. For the reference made to this Father, as our author himself now confesses, expressly pointed out *the exception* to the free exercise of the Christian religion; which in his History he tells us was “enjoyed by the eunuchs, and other officers of the palace, with their wives and children †.” Therefore all that he says in his *Vindication* is unnecessary.

With regard to the second point; “the testimony on which the proof of their toleration was built;” I can hardly be stiled *disingenuous* for concealing it, because it was in fact a passage of which I was ignorant. Mr. G. having only quoted the *Spicilegium* at large, I despaired to discover the *instruction of Theonas*, as the work of *d'Acheron* runs thro' fifteen thick quarto volumes; and it afforded me one ground for my complaint of his

\* Exam. p. 75—81.

† Vind. p. 53. Hist. p. 564.

loose references. But having now by the guidance of *Tillemont* found out the ancient and curious instruction, I shall state the matter fully to my reader.

That the Christians were in a better state in the earlier part of Diocletian's reign, especially in the East, than they had been for many years before, is an incontestible fact. All history confirms it. They suffered however even now very grievously in the West. The letter of Theonas to Lucian is indeed a very curious piece of antiquity. *Tillemont* has given us a fair representation of it; to him Mr. G. refers us; *on whose faith*, he says, *he was contented with quoting it, as he had not the opportunity of quoting the original*: yet Mr. Gibbon has set his own mark.—Theonas, speaking of Diocletian, says, "The Emperor himself, having not yet embraced the Christian religion, entrusted his life and his person to the care of Christians, as to *more faithful men* \*." *Tillemont* thus translates it: "The Prince whom Lucian served was of opinion, that he and his companions would be *more faithful than others, because they were Christians*; so that he intrusted them with the care of his person, and even of his life †." Mr. G. states the matter thus:—"Diocletian and his colleagues frequently conferred the most important offices on those persons who avowed their abhorrence for the worship of the Gods,

\* "Ipse Princeps nondum Christianæ Religioni ascriptus, ipsis Christianis velut fidelioribus vitam et corpus suum curandum credidit. Spicilegium, tom. xii. p. 546.

† Celui sous qui servoit Lucien crut que lui & ses compagnons seroient plus fideles que d'autres, parcequ'ils étoient Chrétiens; de sorte qu'il leur confia le soin de sa personne, & de sa vie même. *Memoires Ecclesiast.* tom. v. part 1. p. 11, 12.

“ but *who had displayed abilities proper for the service of the state* \*.”

Though Mr. Gibbon has passed over this most material circumstance, as not suiting his purpose, he has closely translated Tillemont in the other matters.

“ *Prisca sa femme, & Valerie sa fille, femme de Maximin Galere, peuvent bien avoir contribué à le rendre favorable aux Chrétiens.*”

—Lactance (pers. c. 15.) nous fait aussi juger, ou plutôt nous assure, que les plus puissans des eunuques qui regloient tout dans son palais estoient Chrétiens, & assez genereux pour souffrir même le martyre. La suite nous le fera voir; notamment de *S. Dorothee*, de *S. Pierre*, & de *S. Gorgone*. — Une fort belle instruction dressée par l'évesque Theonas (pour Lucien grand chambellan) nous apprend encor que *Lucien qui estoit fort considéré de son Prince, avoit converti beaucoup d'officiers du palais, comme ceux qui avoient la garde* des

“ But the leisure of the two Empresses, of his wife Prisca, and of Valeria his daughter, permitted them to listen with more attention and respect to the truths of Christianity, which in every age has acknowledged it's important obligations to female devotion. The principal eunuchs *Lucian and Dorotheus, Gorgonius and Andrew*, who attended the person, possessed the favour, and governed the household of Diocletian, protected by their powerful influence the faith which they had embraced. *Their example was imitated by many of the most considerable officers of the palace, who in their respective stations had the care of the imperial ornaments, of the robes,* of

• History, p. 564.

*des ornemens imperiaux, of the furniture, of the  
des pierreries, des habits, jewels, and even of the  
des autres meubles de l'em- private treasury. (Lac-  
pereur, & mesme de son tantius de M. P. c. 15.)  
thresor particulier. Et au —Diocletian and his col-  
lieu que d'autres Princes leagues frequently con-  
avoient regardé les Chré- ferred the most impor-  
tiens comme des gents tant offices on those per-  
dangereux, & fouillez de sons who avowed their  
toutes sortes des crimes, abhorrence for the wor-  
(maleficos) celui sous qui ship of the Gods, but  
servoit Lucien crut que who had displayed abili-  
luy & ses compagnons ties proper for the service  
luy seroient plus fideles of the state†." "Tille-  
que d'autres parce qu'ils mont has quoted—a very  
estoit Chrétiens; de sorte curious instruction which  
te qu'il leur confia le soin Bp. Theonas composed  
de sa personne & de sa for the use of Lucian‡."*

Can there be a more evident proof of his wilful mutilation, misrepresentation, and plagiarism? he inserts or leaves out, at his pleasure, the account of the author whom he pretends to follow faithfully.

We also see, as Tillemont's memoirs lay open before him, they suggested to him the order which he follows in his history.

La profonde paix &	" The corruption of
la liberté tout entiere	" manners and princi-
dont on jouissoit depuis	" ples so forcibly point-
quelque	" ed

\* Tillemont, *ibid.*

† Hist. p. 564.

‡ C. xvi. n. 132.



quelque temps, nous fit “ ed out by Eusebius,”  
tomber, dit Eusebe (l. viii. &c. l. viii. c. 1. & 2.  
c. 1.) dans le relasche-  
ment & dans la Pareffe,  
&c.

Could any thing but the most determined intention at every turn to depreciate Christianity, have led to so artful a misrepresentation? This is a specimen of that rule for making *a consistent and interesting narrative, from authorities, where the authors referred to are not to be expected to vouch for all that is said* \*.

Let me put one question to Mr. G. further. Why did he not give us in his note the *particular* reference to the Spicilegium which Tillemont points out? will he call this *one of those rare instances, which he has never attempted to conceal, wherein he has been obliged to adopt quotations which were expressed with less accuracy than he could have wished*? No; it is plain he has attempted to conceal it: and the reason is obvious. He was afraid that the reader might follow him, and trace his disingenuity of conduct. This is a strong proof that our Historian has undertaken to support a bad cause by means equally culpable. It is with reason his anonymous opponent has applied the censure of the poet to him:

“ *Causa patrocínio non bona pejor erit* †.”

I cannot dismiss this Father, without remarking the different character which Mr. Gibbon, not without the greatest inconsistency, gives us of his writings.

He generally meets with abuse from our faith-

\* Vind. p. 59.

† See an excellent and pointed reply to Mr. Gibbon, intitled, *A short Appeal to the Public, &c.*

ful

ful Historian : who says, the authority of Lactantius is *very doubtful* ; and that he states facts in a manner that *best suits his purpose* \*.

Yet elsewhere he condescends to honor the testimony of Lactantius as well as that of Eusebius, speaking of them as much more to be relied on than the younger Victor † : and ranks them among *unexceptionable authorities* ‡. It appears therefore, that Mr. Gibbon can quote the authority of the Fathers, and speak highly of them, when their relations *suit his hypothesis*.

### EUSEBIUS.

VIII. In retorting the charges of misrepresentation with respect to this author, Mr. Gibbon

• Our author says, after citing Lactantius (de Mort. Persecut. c. 18.) “ Were the particulars of this conference more consistent with truth and decency, we might still ask, how they came to the knowledge of an obscure rhetorician ? But there are many historians who put us in mind of the admirable saying of the great Condé to Cardinal de Retz ; “ *Ces coquins nous font parler et agir, comme ils auroient fait eux-mêmes à notre place.* ” Note 7. c. xiv. See also note 4. c. xiv. note 107. c. xiii. note 167. c. xvi. &c.

† Note 153. c. xiii.

‡ Note 18. c. xiv.

It can hardly be accidental that our author and Mr. Moyle should again use the very same words in speaking of Lactantius. “ Not even Lactantius makes Commodus a persecutor, though he died a violent death, which *would have suited very well with his hypothesis*. And it is for no other reason but the want of this single circumstance, that he has struck Trajan, the Antonini, and Severus, out of the list of the persecutors, though they were all notoriously so.” Works, Vol. ii. p. 264.

Mr. Gibbon says,—“ As Maxentius was vanquished by Constantine, *it suited the purpose of Lactantius* to place his death among those of the persecutors.” Note 167. c. xvi.

I

most

most emphatically says ; “ Some of the charges  
 “ of Mr. Davis on this head are so strong, so  
 “ pointed, so vehemently urged, that he seems  
 “ to have staked, on the event of the trial, the  
 “ merits of our respective characters. If his as-  
 “ sertions are true, I deserve the contempt of the  
 “ learned, and the abhorrence of good men. If  
 “ they are false, \*\*\*\*\* ||.”

I accept the challenge, and am now ready to assert the justice of my censure, where it is supported by facts, and at the same time to acknowledge those mistakes which I committed in stating them.

I shall begin with the second instance urged by Mr. G. as therein I have unfortunately mistaken Eusebius, and attributed to *Maxentius* what is spoken of *Maximin*, concerning *magic and superior cruelty*, not making a proper distinction, as he says, “ to whom the second member of the  
 “ period belonged \*.” Notwithstanding, it is still evident that Eusebius represents *Maxentius*, as well as Maximin, as a persecutor. He says, that he set out with a pretended favour to them for interested reasons.—“ Maxentius at first made  
 “ a false shew (καθυπεκρίνατο) of being a Christian,  
 “ to gain the favour of the Romans, and there-  
 “ fore gave orders to those under his command, to  
 “ cease from persecuting the Christians ; *hypocri-*  
 “ *tically affecting* to be actuated by religion, in  
 “ order to appear to be much more favourable  
 “ and mild than his predecessors. But he did  
 “ not afterwards act as had been expected from  
 “ such a beginning ;” and adds, that he was joined

! Vind. p. 41.

\* Vind. p. 45. Exam. p. 64.

in a private confederacy with Maximin\*. The very title of the chapter, "*on the conduct of the enemies of religion*" (Περὶ τῆς τροπῆς τῶν τῆς εὐσεβείας ἐχθρῶν) proves that Mr. G. must assert, that "*it suited the purpose of Eusebius, as well as Lactantius, to rank Maxentius among the persecutors* †.

But give me leave to recal to my reader's mind (who may not perhaps have my *Examination* and Mr. Gibbon's *History* before him at the same time) the occasion for which our Historian first cited this chapter of Eusebius. It was to confirm his assertion, that "*Maxentius, who oppressed every other class of his subjects, shewed himself just, humane, and even partial towards the afflicted Christians* ‡." Now even granting that the *Christians* only suffered in their civil capacity in the massacre here related by Eusebius, as Mr. G. would have us understand §; we have at best only proofs of the *negative* favor towards them, of his desisting from persecuting them. Nor was this favor long continued; for in this same chapter of Eusebius, we read of the affinity and similarity of the crimes of *Maxentius* to those of *Maximin*; with whom he is called, *a brother in wickedness* ||. The Historian enlarges on a signal example of the cruelty of each of them to two *Christian* women, who refused to submit to their adulterous solicitations \*\*; and expressly attributes the cause of the

\* Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. l. viii. c. 14.

See the passage cited, *Examination*, p. 65.

† History, note 167. c. xvi. Exam. p. 64.

‡ History, p. 577.

§ Vind. p. 45.

|| Ὁ δὲ τυραννὸς Μαξιμίνος, ὡς ἀνὰ πρὸς ἀδελφὸν τὴν κακίαν πρὸς τὸν ἐπὶ Ρωμῆς Φιλίαν κρυβδὸν σπενδομένης κ. τ. λ.

\*\* This fact is mentioned by our author, c. xiv. p. 420. and note 45;

numerous

numerous evils and calamities which the distressed people suffered from the two Emperors, to the *persecution raised against the Christians*; which “*confusions and commotions, he says, did not cease till toleration was granted to them*†.” I have proved therefore, to give our author his phrase back again, “*from the evidence of words and facts, the plain meaning of Eusebius without the concurring testimony of Cæcilius or Lactantius, who (it is agreed on both sides) places the death of Maxentius amongst those of the persecutors;*” that Maxentius did not shew himself *just, nor humane, much less partial towards the afflicted Christians.*

These are all the instances wherein I have been mistaken either *materially, or in less important circumstances.*

I come now to the next division, in which I see no reason, at present, for giving up the smallest point, however disputed by Mr. G. ; and in discharging this, I shall have occasion to shew, that our author has had recourse in his *Vindication* to fresh instances of misrepresentation, in order to clear himself from those before charged on him.

† Τοσαυτη δὴτα κακίας φορα ἵφ' ἑα καὶ τοὶ αὐτοὶ συνεχθῆναι  
 καιροῖν, πρὸς τῶν δύο τυραννῶν ἀνατολῇ καὶ δυσὶ διιληφῶτων κατεργασθῆναι. τίς δ' αὖ τὴν τοσούτων διερευνημένος αἰτίας διζαξαι, μὴ ἔχοντων ΚΑΘ' ἩΜΩΝ ΔΙΩΓΜΩΝ ἀποφθῆναι. ὅτι γὰρ μάλιστα ἢ πρότερον τὰ τῆς τοσούτου πεπαιγμένου συγχύσεως, ἢ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΟΥΣ τὰ τῆς παρεργίας ἀπολαβεῖν. Hist. Eccles. l. viii. c. 14.

THIRD

## T H I R D C L A S S .

Several of the artifices, made use of by our historian, to evade the accusation alleged by me, have already been taken notice of: I come now to some other classes, which are ranked under this head, because I cannot allow the validity of his plea.

And, in order to prevent for the future, my improperly applying the word MISREPRESENTATION, which (as Mr. G. complains) has been once or twice used in too general a sense: I shall keep before my eyes an instance that Dr. Johnson produces of its import, in his dictionary, from *Atterbury*; which is,

“ Since I have shewn him his foul mistakes and  
“ injurious *Misrepresentations*, it would become  
“ him publickly to own and retract them.”

III. He says, that I support one class of Misrepresentations, by making him answerable for the circumjacent errors and inconsistencies of the authors whom he quotes. *Justin*, *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Tacitus* are the instances he produces \*. But as their testimony was made the criterion by which he was condemned †; I shall set these three down as charges which he could not disprove.

X. By dogmatical assertion, he hopes to evade other accusations. In the number of these are several instances brought from Mosheim; among which he makes most decisive work, and would set aside six of them without offering any refutation; and bestows only a few words, little to the purpose, on a seventh. But till he gives a better reason for his silence than by saying, that “ the

\* Vind. p. 60.

† Exam. p. 5, 9, 10.

“ superfluous

“superfluous observations he could make on these questions would be an abuse of his reader’s time, and his own \*;” I shall consider these as *seven* more instances to which he can give no satisfactory answer.

XI. The passage of *Irenæus* respecting *the gift of tongues*, urged by me †, as well as by Doctor Chelsum ‡, meets only the feeble attack of positive denial unsupported by authority. With reason he says, “the truth of the matter was thoroughly sifted in the controversy about the duration of miracles §;” but he must not be offended if I give a new turn to his phrase, and assert that the works of Dr. *Middleton’s Adversaries* still remain, to confute the fallacious argument drawn from the words of *Irenæus*. The validity therefore of this instance, as the *eleventh* charge not disproved, I must still maintain.

There is one species more of artifice, perhaps unheard of before, adopted by our Author, to elude the force of other instances: which is “*by a judicious reunion and arrangement of the dispersed*

\* Vind. p. 64.

† Exam. p. 46.

‡ Remarks, p. 67. To several other of the learned Doctor’s objections, he has only given such *dogmatical* answers: and what is more strange, is, that he should run into this strain while he is inveighing against the practice.—“The *dogmatical* part of their work, which in every sense of the word, deserves that appellation, is ill adapted to engage my attention, &c.” Yet in the very next page he says, “If I have rejected, and *rejected with some contempt*, the *interpolation* which pious fraud has very awkwardly inserted in the text of Josephus, &c.” May we not ask him in turn, *why so dogmatical then*, upon a point about which the learned are divided; most of them giving us their reasons for their several opinions, whereas Mr. G. has given none?

§ Vind. p. 103.

“*materials*

“ materials from several authors, to form a consistent and interesting narrative.”

XVI. There are five instances thus mixed up and qualified ; those of *Pliny*, *Orosius*, *Bayle*, *Fabrics*, *Gregory of Tours*, with an *etcætera*, which, for aught I know, may be extended to every author cited by him \*. These opposite testimonies he so dextrously manages, as to make them corroborate the same identical fact ; as an expert chymist causes liquors, of contrary qualities when separate, by a *judicious mixture*, to be absorbed in each other's powers. In plain truth, and to drop allusions ; it is a memorable rule for extracting from authors what they never wrote ; and allows one to strengthen any sentiment whatever by an authority which is in fact directly opposite.

No writer of romance could wish for a greater liberty. In this way it would be easy so to blend the evidence of original history, that the narrative, like Jack's coat, as represented by the witty Dean, should fit the shape of every one.

One might collect a defence of Christianity from *Voltaire's* works, or *Mr. Gibbon's* two obnoxious chapters ; and the Bible might furnish a treatise against religion. Nothing should be inserted which, is “ not proved by some one of the witnesses ;” but the reader could not be so unreasonable as “ to expect that each of them,” (as their testimony might be opposite) “ should vouch for the whole, nor that one should define the boundaries of their respective property †.” If *Mr. Gibbon* did not so strenuously talk against popery in his *Vindication* ‡, I should suspect that he intended to imitate it's favourite mode of dividing and trans-

\* Vind. p. 59.

† Ibid. p. 59.

‡ Ibid. p. 65.



ferring sins ; and though I may perhaps, without the fear of incurring much shame, confess that *I was totally ignorant of this new mode of historical composition* \*, introduced by the Historian of the Roman empire ; yet, till I find that the *generality* of historians have followed the practice of displaying pompous but *useless* authorities in their notes, I shall add these to the former number, which is now increased to *sixteen* vain attempts to remove my charge.

I come now to those instances in which he has thought proper to descend to particulars.

### EUSEBIUS.

XVII. The story of Nemesion is the first instance from Eusebius attacked by Mr. G.—“ In the relation of which,” he says, “ I have really suppressed several material circumstances †.” I wish for no better proof of the truth of my former charge, and my justification in the present case, than our Author’s own narrative.

The pages of my *Examination*, which precede the notice I have taken of this fact, give a more particular account of the persecution at Alexandria, and the number of the martyrs, than Mr. Gibbon has even now given. The whole story of Nemesion is extracted from the Greek of Eusebius, which I produced in my note ; the substance of it was inserted in my text. It is absurd, therefore, to imagine I could hope to conceal any part from my reader’s observation, unless I could imagine no one would read the Greek. The words which our Author has translated, as containing “ *several material circumstances really sup-*

\* Vind. p. 58.

† Ibid. p. 49.

“ *pressed*

“ pressed by me ; make for my purpose, not against  
 “ me.” He himself allows, that this “ Egyptian  
 “ was *falsely* or *maliciously* accused as a companion of  
 “ robbers. Before the centurion he *justified himself*  
 “ from [he was acquitted of] this calumny, which  
 “ did not relate to him (*αλλοτριωτατην* *very improba-*  
 “ *ble, foreign*) : but being charged as a Christian he  
 “ was brought before the governor,” &c. And if I  
 passed over this proof of the Roman governor’s  
 justice, in inflicting on an innocent person a dou-  
 ble measure of tortures, laying the principal stress  
 on Nemefion’s suffering as a Christian, it was not  
 omitted by my brother *sycophant* \*, as Mr. Gibbon  
 facetiously stiles us ; nor will it establish the infe-  
 rence he wishes to draw from it. “ It is no less  
 “ evident,” says he “ that whatever might be the  
 “ opinion of the centurion, the supreme magi-  
 “ strate considered Nemefion as guilty, and that  
 “ he affected to shew, by the measure of his tor-  
 “ tures, and by the companions of his execution,  
 “ that he punished him, not only as a Christian,  
 “ but as a robber †.” This is a pretty extraordi-  
 nary assertion : it is plain from Dionysius that Ne-  
 mesion was accused to the governor *only of being a*  
*Christian* ‡ ; the governor could only take cogni-  
 sance of that charge : and the order (“ that after  
 inflicting on Nemefion *a double measure of stripes*  
*and tortures,*—he should be burnt with the  
 robbers,”) could not have been given, had he  
 been deemed a robber himself. As to the mea-  
 sures of his tortures, and the companions of his  
 execution—if any conclusion can be drawn from  
 thence to his being considered as a robber, it

\* Dr. Chelsum’s Remarks, p. 209, &c.

† Vind. p. 43.

‡ Dionysius apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. vi. c. 41. See  
Exam. p. 62.

would prove equally that Christ suffered for murder and sedition\*.

Mr. Gibbon may content himself with saying *Nemesion was accused*; but we will add, it was a *false* accusation: he may insinuate that he suffered as a robber; but he must first make it appear that the governor was acquainted with the former accusation: and though I admire the plausible pretext of which he avails himself, I fear he will not be able, to convince the learned and impartial, that *he himself has been falsely accused*. Therefore I conclude that his attempt to vindicate himself, proceeds on either Misapprehensions or Misrepresentations; and it ends only in a compliment to his own candour, for giving a wrong sense to a Greek word, used by the historian.

XVIII. The third remark taken notice of by my antagonist respects the propriety of his quoting, under the name of Jerom, "the Chronicle which he ought to have described as the work and property of Eusebius †." The learning so ostentatiously displayed by him, and introduced with such a pomp of words, is enough to dazzle and confound a young student, whom, he elsewhere boldly represents as, "hastily consulting an unknown author, on a subject with which he is unacquainted ‡."

I know

\* I know not whether I am obliged to the *candour* or to the *learning* of my opponent, that he scorned to take notice of the *gross blunder* I had been guilty of, in translating the deponent verb *criminator* in a passive sense. *I am falsely charged*—for *I charge falsely*; but I am as willing to confess an error, as to stand firm to what I have justly advanced.

† Vind. p. 46.

‡ Vind. p. 10. I cannot help animadverting on the unkind manner in which Mr. G. here speaks of *Scaliger*, as well  
as

I know not why Mr. G. should be displeased that I gave him so fair an opportunity of enquiring into, and informing the world of the history of this Chronicle of Eusebius. But though "I give credit to *the Historian of the Roman Empire*, when he affirms, that he consulted a Latin Chronicle of the affairs of that Empire;" yet I shall, in my turn, perhaps, be credited, if I shew that I *know something more of it beside the name and the title-page*. No doubt, in some cases, there would have been no great impropriety in quoting this Chronicle under the name of *Jerom*. Mr. G. allows that "some chronological fragments which had successively passed through the hands of

as *Jerom*, and *Rufinus*; at the very moment in which he must be sensible how much he is indebted to their learning.

"But that proud critic," says he (meaning Scaliger) "always ready to applaud his own success, did not flatter himself that he had restored the hundredth part of the genuine *Chronicle of Eusebius*."

And again: "The second book" (of the Chronicle of Eusebius) "was translated into Latin by *Jerom*, with the freedom, or rather licence, which that voluminous author, as well as his friend or enemy *Rufinus*, always assumed."

This ungrateful behaviour puts me in mind of the reproof given by Dr. Bentley to his opponent; who, like my adversary, was "not contented with abusing the ancients, unless he bestow his civilities upon some of the greatest of the moderns. *Salmasius*," he says, "and *Scaliger*, were all *Gall and Pride and Pedantry*." &c. In answer to this, the learned Bentley says,—“If a magisterial air, and too much heat and passion, appear in their writings, a candid reader will forgive it, and say, *Sume superbiam Quasitam meritis*; he'll impute some of it to their temper, but most to the ill usage they met with from envy and detraction. To hate and despise a man, at the same time they are profiting by him, is an ill mixture of the worst of human passions. A little haughtiness and warmth, when accompanied with merit, will be forgiven by some, but such black ingratitude will be hated and despised by all.” Bentley's Preface to *Dissertations on Phalaris*, p. 102.

“ Africanus and Eusebius, are still extant ;” and as *he talks so familiarly of the Chronicle of Eusebius*, he, surely, *will not be surprised* to hear that, fortunately for me, the passage in dispute still exists in the Greek original, and removes the little ambiguity in the Latin word *movisset*. The Greek stands thus : *Αυρηλιανος ΜΕΛΛΩΝ διωγμον κινειν κατα Χριστιανων βειω κεραυνω διακωλυεται* \*.—Thus the History of Eusebius and his Chronicle speak precisely the same sense. The language of the original is not ambiguous ; and Eusebius himself ought to have been appealed to, and not his interpreter.

In my *Examination* I observed, that “ the Latin expression of the Chronicle, *Cum adversum nos persecutionem movisset*,” implied *much more than hostile intentions* † ; but upon more critical inspection, I am of opinion that the Latin word *movisset* does not necessarily signify that the persecution was begun. The phrases *multa movens animo*, — *majus opus moveo* ‡, denote a design not put in execution.

I am able also to shew, in contradiction to our Author’s assertion, that many learned men have *not* thought the expression of the Chronicle of Jerom *always proper* ; Lardner, speaking of this very passage, quotes it from Jerom’s Latin edition of the *Chronicle of Eusebius* ; I might specify also Usher, Reland, Prideaux, Helvicus, Mosheim, Bentley, &c. §.

\* Euseb. Chronicon. p. 222, ed. Scaliger. in *Thesaurο Temp.* Amstelod. 1658.

† Exam. p. 66.

‡ Virgil. *Æneid.* lib. vii. 45. l. x. 890.

§ The expression of Bentley is worthy notice.—“ But St. Jerom, out of some unknown Chronologer (for that note is not extant in the Greek of *Eusebius*), gives a different time of his reign.” Bentley’s *Dissert. on the Epistles of Phalaris*, p. 28.

The very title of the book, as I before observed, is *Eusebii Chronicon Divo Hieronymo Interprete*: and I do not find that the generality of authors deal so unfairly and unkindly with Eusebius as to give up the credit of his laborious chronicle to the name of *Jerom*, for his trouble in translating it.

Let us put a similar case:—We have only a Latin, and barbarous translation of the works of *Irenæus*, the original Greek being entirely lost, except a few fragments: but how absurd and ridiculous would it appear, if *Jerom* had been this Latin interpreter, to stile the book, *Hieronymus adversus Hæreses*. With the same reason therefore that we still call the translation *Irenæus adversus Hæreses*, we are to quote the *Chronicle* as the *work of Eusebius*.

With regard to the persecution of Aurelian, the reality of which I seemed to favour, in my *Examination*\*; I can easily shew that my opinion is confirmed by respectable authority. Lardner thus states the case:

“ I proceed to the only thing farther to be observed concerning *Aurelian*, that by divers Christian authors he is reckoned among the persecutors of the church. Sulpicius Severus quite omits him, in his catalogue. Nevertheless Eusebius adds †—  
 “ Thus was *Aurelian* affected towards us at that  
 “ time, but in the farther advances of his empire,  
 “ his mind was altered towards us, owing to  
 “ the advices of some men about him, so that he  
 “ raised a persecution against us. Much discourse  
 “ there was every where about it. But the divine  
 “ justice arrested him, when he was just signing  
 “ the edicts against us: so, as it were, holding

\* Exam. p. 66.

† Hist. Eccles. l. vii. c. 30.

“ his hand, that he should not perform what he had designed, &c.”

“ In Jerom’s Latin edition of the *Chronicle of Eusebius*, it is said, “ that when *Aurelian* had raised a persecution against us, he was terrified by lightning, that fell near him and his companions, and soon after he was slain \*.”

“ Orosius † speaks much to the like purpose, and makes this the ninth persecution.” Dr. Lardner then quotes the author of the deaths of persecutors ‡, and Augustin §, who “ expressly mentions this among the other heathen persecutions of the Christians, and reckons it the ninth.”

“ Mr. Dodwell || supposeth, that *Aurelian*’s persecution was only intended, and not put in execution. And indeed Eusebius has so expressed himself about this matter, in his Ecclesiastical History, as has occasioned some learned men to hesitate about it. But upon more carefully examining his words, and observing the accounts of other authors, learned men\*\*, have generally, and, as I think, very judiciously, determined, that *Aurelian* not only intended, but did actually persecute. But his persecution was short, he having died soon after the publication of his edicts.”

“ Mr. Mosheim is of opinion, that many Christians did not suffer at this time. But, †† considering

\* Chron. p. 177.

† L. vii. c. 23.

‡ Cap. vi.

§ De Civ. Dei. l. xviii. cap. 52.

|| De paucitate Mart. § 64. init.

\*\* Non intentatam modo, sed executioni quoque brevissimo tempore mandatam, nobis est infixum in animo. Basnag. ann. 275, n. ii. Et conf. Pagi ann. 272, n. iv.—xii. et 273.

†† Mosheim de reb. &c. p. 558. Aurelianus, qui Claudium, &c.—præteritis atrocius futurum fuisset,

*Aurelian*’s

“ *Aurelian’s* cruel temper, and how much he was  
 “ addicted to the superstitions of Gentilism, he  
 “ thinks, that if he had lived, his persecution would  
 “ have exceeded all the former persecutions in se-  
 “ verity \*.”

We may surely therefore conclude that Aurelian had actually carried his hostile intentions into execution.

### CYPRIAN.

XIX. I have already shewn that Mr. Gibbon’s *single instance of legal delay* granted to an accused Christian, which he cited from *Justin Martyr*, avails little to prove that it was *the general practice* of the Roman magistrates. The division of my charges obliged me to separate the authorities by which he endeavours to establish the fact. In the one I had mis-stated the circumstance; in the other quoted from *Cyprian*, our author is totally wrong. He tells us, “ This observation had been suggested, partly by a general expression of *Cyprian*, *Dies negantibus præstitutus †, &c.*” On the contrary, it appears from the whole passage in this Father, that “ there were proclamations issued by governors or other magistrates, determining a fixed day for every Christian to renounce his faith: all who were suspected, and did not comply with this edict, were immediately after the fixed day, without farther trial, held guilty, and punished either with death, confiscation of goods, or banishment ‡.” What hu-

\* *Heathen Testimonies*, vol. iii. p. 117, 4<sup>o</sup> ed. Lond. 1766.

† *Vind.* p. 49.

‡ *Cyprian*, p. 122, edit. Fell. Oxon, 1682. “ *Cum dies negantibus præstitutus excessit; quisquis professus intra diem non est, Christianum se esse confessus est,*” &c. See also the note on this passage,

manity



manity either Mosheim or Mr. Gibbon can discover in such proceedings I know not.—I do not believe any thing more detestable can be proved against the cruellest Inquisitor \*.

TILLEMONT.

\* My adversary having taken no notice of the four instances which I urged in my Examination (p. 47—53. 109.) of his having misrepresented *Cyprian*, so that I shall have only this opportunity of saying any thing of that Father; I shall make use of it to lay before my reader Dr. *Burgb's* opinion (Inquiry, p. 308.) of our Historian's unjust representation of the character of this bishop and martyr.

“ To the name of *Cyprian*, bishop of Carthage, the world has lately been introduced. How far his character and conduct have been justly delineated, it is not my province to enquire. I am contented, that a fervent zeal to unite, shall still be construed into an artful ambition to rule the Church of Christ; that the strenuous effort to check the progress of error, shall still be construed into the claim or exercise of an usurped prerogative. I have no immediate motive to deny, that the utmost felicity of human life is constituted by the mitigation of exile, and the safety of a certain bishop judiciously exemplified in the proscription, the banishment, and the murder of *Cyprian*. The tenets, not the virtues, of the early Christians form the subject of the present inquiry; and to the ascertainment of the former, the vindication of the latter is by no means necessary. Let persecution continue to enjoy the advocacy of a new-found apologist, and, assuming the symbols of justice, inflict a merited punishment on the guilt of Christianity, I am not now concerned to repel the blow; I have not undertaken to exculpate the members, but to investigate and promulge the doctrine of the primitive Church.

The establishment of dates, however, is within my province, and therefore it is necessary, that the merit of killing *Cyprian*, since meritorious we are taught to conceive it, should be resumed from *Decius*, to whom it has been erroneously ascribed, and restored to its proper owner, the Emperor *Valerian*. But where the humility, with which this martyr professed the hope of eternal glory to be his sole motive for preferring death to the abjuration of his faith in Christ, is represented as mere affectations, there I acquiesce; nay, I must accede; for, upon setting aside the testimony of every ancient record, it appears upon the stronger evidence of modern suggestion

## TILLEMONT.

XX. Mr. Gibbon has attempted to defend his partial representation of a passage of Gregory of Tours, taken from Tillemont\*, which was censured by me†, and which was deemed also by Dr. Randolph worthy of censure. But let us observe the mode of his defence :

He first most artfully disjoins the phrases “ *de la ville & des environs* (the town and its environs), “ *tant de la ville que de la campagne* (as well of “ *the city as the country*),” which seemed to confine the limits of the extensive diocese, and places before his reader’s eye the words “ *Les environs, “ la campagne, le pays d’alentour*” (the last of which relates to another matter) to make them appear synonymous to the word *diocese*. Yet even the reason which he now assigns in his *Vindication*, does not seem to authorise this translation : but the chief point is, his omission of the subsequent passage, which will still wear a *partial and suspicious aspect*; especially as his chief argument now advanced in excuse depends on his insinuating that these conversions were *fabulous*. He says “ Such “ was the inconsiderable flock which Gregory began to feed about the year two hundred and “ forty, and the real or *fabulous* conversions ascribed

suggestion (and who can resist it ?) that he was instigated to extend his neck to the stroke of a common executioner by that far more adequate principle, the most aspiring temporal ambition.”

See Mr. Gibbon’s History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. i. p. 546.—Vide Cypriani Opera prope passim, præsertim ad Demetrianum lib. p. 193.

\* Vind. p. 75.

† Exam. p. 136.

“ to

“ to that wonder-working bishop during a reign  
“ of thirty years \*.”

It is no wonder that our author should endeavour to make the amazing conversion appear fabulous ; as *it suits his hypothesis* of confining the limits of the progress of the Gospel. But one who believes the influence of the Spirit to have been so great, that three thousand souls were converted by one sermon of St. Peter's, will not think it very incredible, that the same co-operating grace should prosper, and bless the ministry of Bishop Gregory, so as to produce the effect above mentioned, in the course of thirty years.

But however it be, surely as Mr. G. had taken the former part of the story from Tillemont, to use Dr. Randolph's words,—“ common candour,  
“ and the acknowledged fundamental laws of  
“ history, seem to have required that the *subsequent*  
“ success of Christianity should have been related,  
“ as well as the prevalence of Paganism †.”

But this, as I have shewn, is not the only instance in which he has unfaithfully borrowed from Tillemont, and most ungratefully misrepresented the learned compilations to which he was indebted.

### TERTULLIAN.

XXI. I had given, in my *Examination*, an instance of our author's *mutilating and mis-*“ *trans-*  
“ *lating a passage* which he produces, to bring in  
“ this Father guilty of passing an unjust sentence  
“ of *condemnation on the wisest and most virtuous of*  
“ *the Pagans ‡.*”

\* Vind. p. 77.

† Remarks, p. 160.

‡ Exam. p. 29.

I translated

I translated Tertullian's words *literally*, and put Mr. Gibbon's translation in an opposite column, that the reader might be sensible of the *material* sentences omitted by him, and omitted probably because they contain the reasons assigned by Tertullian for this harsh language, and might in some degree extenuate his severity. But he says, with uncommon assurance,—“ Happy should I “ think myself, if the materials of my History “ could be always exposed to the examination of “ the public; and I shall content myself with appealing to the impartial reader, whether *my version of this passage is not as fair and as faithful as the more literal translation which Mr. Davis “ has exhibited in an opposite column* \*.” Does he think that no one can read Tertullian's own words? Or does he persuade himself that his *positive assertion* will set aside the testimony of our senses? Where has he translated these sentences: “ Ille “ ultimus et perpetuus judicii dies, *ille nationibus “ insperatus, ille derisus, cum tanta sæculi vetustas, “ et tot ejus nativitates uno igne baurientur*.” Again, “ Tot spectans ac tantos reges, *qui in calam recepti “ nuntiabantur, cum ipso Jove ac ipsis suis testibus in “ imis tenebris congemiscences*?” And above all, those peculiar words,—“ Sapientes illos philosophos—*quibus nihil ad Deum pertinere suadebant, “ quibus animas, aut nullas, aut non in pristina corpora redituras adfirmabant*†?” And where does he meet with the words—*so many poets, so many magistrates, &c.*—in the original?

But though he has passed over these extenuations, he still, in his *Vindication*, pursues and exaggerates the *infernal description*. He informs us that

\* Vind. p. 30, 31.

† See Exam. p. 29, 30. Tertullian. de Spectaculis, c. 30.

Tertullian

Tertullian “alludes to the improvement which  
 “the agility of the dancers, the *red* livery of the  
 “charioteers, and the attitudes of the wrestlers,  
 “would derive from the effects of fire.” For my  
 own part, I think that his words do not refer to  
 these only, but rather point out the base corrup-  
 tion of morals which brought the people into the  
 situation which he describes. He is speaking as an  
 Orator to dissuade\* ; he is not expressing a wish.

Aptly indeed has a late ingenious writer, speak-  
 ing of the primitive Christians, put this question  
 to Mr. Gibbon : “Why, but for the pleasure of  
 “dwelling upon faults and exposing weaknesses,  
 “are both exhibited with such frequent care and  
 “critical caution? Why was the flaming zeal of  
 “the stern *Tertullian* drawn from its obscurity?  
 “Why was it given us in its horrid colours—not  
 “in *all* its horrid colours indeed, because you have  
 “contrived to heighten the terror of the picture,  
 “by affecting to draw that veil over a part, with  
 “which you ought rather to have covered the  
 “whole †?”

Our author then proceeds to another point ; “I  
 “cannot refuse to answer Mr. Davis’s very par-  
 “ticular question, Why I appeal to Tertullian  
 “for the condemnation of the wisest and most  
 “virtuous of the Pagans? *Because* I am inclined

\* Mr. Gibbon might have seen, that M. de Tillemont, whom he follows on other occasions pretty closely, inclines to my interpretation ; that it was written to *dissuade* the Christians from frequenting the public shows.

“Tertullien rapporte (dans le livre des spectacles) quel-  
 “ques exemples du jugement que Dieu avoit exercé sur les  
 “Chrétiens qui alloient aux spectacles, pour montrer com-  
 “bien ces divertissemens profanes luy étoient en abomina-  
 “tion.” Tom. iii. part 1, p. 355. art. 6.

† Dialogues of the Dead with the Living, p. 182. Printed for Conant and Payne. 1779.

“to

“ to bestow that epithet on Trajan and the Antonines, Homer and Euripides, Plato and Aristotle, who are all manifestly included within the fiery description which I had produced \*.”

But give me leave to ask if there were no bad and sceptical philosophers ; no loose and profligate Poets and Tragedians, in or about the time of Tertullian, that this respectable group should only be brought forward ? or were any of them, except Trajan and the Antonines, born after the birth of Christ ? if not, our Historian himself tells us, that *a charitable hope might be indulged in their favour* †. But we need not wonder that he should, with so little foundation, earnestly endeavour to represent this doctrine of “ the condemnation of the wisest and most virtuous of the Pagans, as *the belief of the primitive church* ;” and with slyest insinuation tell us, that “ the Janesists, who have so diligently studied the works of the Fathers, maintain this sentiment with distinguished zeal ;” as if it was owing to that cause ‡ : for he does not hesitate to assert, that it is *still the public doctrine of all the Christian churches* ; and in his *Vindication*, to offer as an apology the following evasive sentence :—“ I shall submit to the judgment of the public, whether the Athanasian Creed is not read and received in the church of England, and whether the wisest and most virtuous of the Pagans believed the catholic faith, which is declared in the Athanasian Creed to be absolutely necessary for salvation §.”

\* Vind. p. 31, 32.

† History, p. 473.

‡ Note 68. c. xv.

§ Vind. p. 103.

Is it not strange, that such a reason as this should be employed by the Historian of the Roman Empire? Can he himself be so deluded as to suppose the most illiterate of his readers will for a single moment remain a dupe to such sophistry? Where are all his rules of logic, of which he boasts? By what reasoning can he prove that a test of faith was of force before ever it was established? or that a creed, drawn up for the use and confession of *Christians*, is to be extended, in its sense, to *Pagans*. But, as the Athanasian doctrine has given occasion of offence to some Christians, it suited well with his purpose of weakening the influence of religion, to advance this controversial argument \*.

But to return to Tertullian:—Mr. Gibbon in his *Vindication* says, “As I was sensible, that the “Montanism of Tertullian is the convenient screen “which our orthodox divines have placed before his errors, I have, with peculiar caution, “confined myself to those works which were composed in the more early and sounder part of his “life †.”

Our author does not seem to be much acquainted with this matter; for he seldom quotes those books which are usually supposed by the learned to be written before he became a Montanist, and generally those which were undoubtedly written after he adopted the reveries of that sect.

The learned reader will not be displeased to

\* The reader who wishes to examine further into the design and import of the Athanasian Creed, will find it ably defended by *Wheatley* on the Common Prayer; *Waterland* on the Athanasian Creed; and by *Horbery*, in a sermon on that subject.

† Vind. p. 33.

have a view of the point in question. I shall therefore present to him the opinions of authors of credit who have attempted to fix the period.

Dr. Lardner thus speaks of it\*:—"Many learned men have employed their labour in settling the time of the several works of this author.—*Cave* reckons but three of his books writ while he was a catholic, &c.—Du Pin places his *Apology* in 200 (and says, he became an open Montanist about 205).—*Basnage* †, in 203.—*Pagi* in 205 ‡; but I think his arguments not sufficient to prove it so late."

The three treatises selected by *Cave* (who generally follows the order of *Allix*, in this point) as written previous to the heresy of Tertullian, are those, *De Baptismo*; *De Pœnitentia*; & *De Oratione* §.

*Tillemont* places his *Apology*, and his treatise on *public shows*, among his orthodox books ||: but that *Allix* and *Du Pin* differ from him in his opinion, he himself tells us ††.

It

\* *Credibility of the Gospel History*, vol. ii. c. 27. on Tertullian, p. 569. 8vo. ed.

† A. D. 200. sect. 8.

‡ Critic. in Baron. A. D. 199. sect. 6.

§ *Cave* justly points out the confusion and debates which have arisen on this subject, and thus delivers his sentiment;

"De tempore atque ordine, quo in scriptis suis exarandis usus est Tertullianus litem haud exiguam movent eruditi. In his cum Doctiss. D. *Allix* (Dissert. de Tertull. vit. & script.) rei veritatem proxime omnium attingisse videatur, ordinem ab eo designatum in enumerandis Tertulliani operibus præcipue sequar, ita tamen, ut in nonnullis a viro clarissimo non possum non dissentire. Ante lapsum scripta.

De Baptismo. De Pœnitentia liber. De Oratione." *Cave*, Script. Eccles. Hist. Literar. tom. i. p. 92. fol. Oxon. 1740.

|| *Tillemont*, Mem. Eccles. tom. iii. part 1. not. 25. sur Tertullien.

†† Tom. iii. part 1. note xi. p. 546. D'Allix vit. Tertul.

F

c. 6.



It is therefore plain that we shall take the mean and more probable computation, by fixing his lapse into Montanism to the year 200\*. Mosheim, in his Dissertation on the Apology, justly complains of the obscurity and perplexity which embarrasses the subject †.

But there is one treatise in particular, *De Corona*, which Mr. G. endeavours to prove to have been *written before he was engaged in the errors of the Montanists* ‡. But *I shall be*, in my turn, *morose enough to overwhelm him with a load of quotations*, which all his learning will not be able to remove; to shew that this assertion is contrary to the sentiments of the learned,

In the dissertation which Mosheim has written to fix the date of Tertullian's Apology, we meet with the following note.

“ The book of this African (*de Corona militis*) was written at a time in which the church had enjoyed a long interval of peace. This can be no other than that which preceded the persecution of Severus, about the year 202, which produced the Apology. Therefore in

c. 6. p. 46. Du Pin. p. 248. (p. 90. 4<sup>o</sup> ed. Paris 1690.) See also Rigalt's Dissertation prefixed to his edition of Tertullian: and Forbeshus, vol. iii. l. 7. c. 8. § 16.

\* “ Circa mediam aetatem, teste Hieronymo, (*de Script. c. 53.*) —anno uti non male conjici potest 199.) ad Montani dogma prolabitur.” Cave, *Hist. Liter.* p. 91.

† Hoc non possum, quia moneam, ex præceptis & dogmatibus Tertulliani vix judicari posse, quosnam ille libros ante, quosnam post defectionem suam ad Montanistam conscripserit. Nam plerisque eorum errorum, quos in Montano Christiani recte sentientes damnavunt, jam ante fovit homo hic supra modum tristis & severus, quam Montanus res novas inter Christianos moliretur. Parum scilicet novi Montanus docuit Tertullianum: qui propterea tantum hominem illum amplexus est, quod eum in plerisque secum consentientem cernebat.” Mosheim, *Dissertat.* vol. i. p. 54. not.

‡ Note 49. c. xv.

" the book *de Corona*, Tertullian was already a Montanist, as all the commentators agree." Upon which words Mosheim makes this observation; " The force of this learned person's reasonings turn to this point; Tertullian wrote his treatise *de Corona* a little before the beginning of the persecution by Severus: and that he was engaged in the sect of the Montanists when he wrote this book is the opinion of all the interpreters §."

This date of Tertullian *de Corona*, adopted by Mosheim, must carry great weight with it, as his enquiries were extensive and minute; and directed to the particular consideration of this Father's works. But I shall still add to this by producing other authority.

Du Pin ranks the treatise *de Corona* among the works of Tertullian which were certainly composed after he was a Montanist\*.

*Alix*, and *Cave* after him, suppose it to be written about the year 208†; and consequently class it with those works which were written after his lapse into heresy.

I shall therefore conclude, supported by so strong and respectable a body of authors, that notwithstanding Mr. G.'s objection, the arguments of

§ Le livre de cet Africain *de la Couronne du soldat*, &c. Mosheim. Dissertat. de Apologet. Tertull. p. 53. Bibliotheca Rationnée Amstelod. tom. ii. Part. ii. p. 292. This is introduced in the Bibliotheca Rationnée, in the account given of Mr. Jackson's edition of the works of Novatianus, and is a critique on one of his notes.

\* Voilà tous les ouvrages qu'on peut attribuer à Tertullien orthodoxe, tous les autres étant certainement écrits, après qu'il a été Montaniste.

Le Livre de la Couronne is among the last class. Bibliotheca, p. 92, 93.

† Hist. Literar. p. 92. " Post lapsum.—De Corona mihi licetis circa an. 208. scriptus."

Tillemont are sufficient to confirm his *wishes* and opinion. He insists upon the circumstances mentioned in the treatise, "of there being two Emperors, and the long peace which the church had enjoyed, but which was now threatened with a persecution; as well as upon the subject of it, which displays an enthusiastic zeal and schismatic spirit." I conclude therefore, with him, that the treatise de Corona was undoubtedly written after Tertullian was a Montanist †.

### *On the Apocalypse.*

It is evident from the representation which our Historian has given of the reception of the Apo-

† "Il est indubitable qu'il a écrit son livre de la Couronne depuis son schisme, en un temps où il y avoit deux Empereurs, lorsque l'Eglise estoit depuis long temps dans la paix & dans une grande tranquillité, mais qu'on craignoit devoir estre suivie d'une persecution. En considerant toute l'histoire du temps de Tertullien, il est difficile de placer ces choses que vers la 6<sup>e</sup> année de Severe, en 198. ou 199. ou au commencement de Maximin, qui avoit associé son fils à l'Empire. Mais comme nous ne voyons pas moyen de dire que Tertullien fut Montaniste des 199. ni de quelques années après: il reste qu'il ait écrit ce livre au commencement de Maximin vers l'an 235, &c. Mem. Eccles. tom. iii. art. 6. p. 384.

Mais le sujet sur lequel il le fit étant une partie considerable de l'histoire de l'Eglise, nous en ferons ici le récit dans ses propres termes, pleins de ce faux zele & de cet esprit schismatique & superbe dont il estoit possédé. Ibid. p. 385.

It should be observed that Tillemont fairly translates his author, saying, "*the soldier appeared with his crown in his hand.*" Paroissoit seul la couronne à la main.

But Mr. G. has already been told, by his anonymous opponent, of his unfair representation of the soldier's behaviour, and "desired to convince the unlearned part of his readers, that *laurum in manu gestare*, was to throw away *his crown of laurel.*"

See "A short Appeal to the Public;" p. 22. and "A few Remarks," p. 16.

calypse,

calypse, that he has a great desire to invalidate its authenticity. I have already shewn in my *Examination*, that some of the authorities by which he would support his attack on this book of the New Testament, were insufficient; and Dr. Chelsum has confuted the rest. But as he says in his *Vindication*, that *he shall easily wipe away these imputations*, I shall give the matter, as it is important, a more full consideration.

It is thus introduced in his history; "A mysterious prophecy, which still forms a part of a sacred canon, but which was thought to favour the exploded sentiment (of the Millenium) has very narrowly escaped the proscription of the church \*." The first confirmation which he gives of this, in his note, respecting the decree of the council of Laodicea, has been fully answered by the learned Dr. Chelsum; who has shewn on the best authority, that "it is *not proscribed* by them, but only is not enjoined to be read †; and that this was occasioned only by it's being thought too mysterious to be rightly understood by common hearers ‡." Indeed Mr. Gibbon has entirely acquiesced in his opponent's argument; and in his *Vindication* allows the very fact

\* History, p. 472.

† Remarks, p. 58. Twells' Critical Examen, &c.

‡ Bp. Cofin's Scholastical History, &c. Bp. Gibson's Third Pastoral Letter (p. 207, &c. 8vo. ed. Lond. 1760.)

In a learned work of Mr. Gregory, M. A. of Ch. Ch. we meet with the following passage:

"The printed Arabic hath it (the Revelations) so the Coptic, Armenian, &c. What if the Laodicean canon acknowledge it not? it is more to be marvelled at that it should be found in the Apostolical. In the Greek I do not say, but in the Arabic translation it is thus mentioned, "*The sixth is the Revelation of St. John, called Apocalypsis*," &c. Gregory's Works, Preface, 4<sup>o</sup> ed.

for which he contended—" The assembled Bishops of Asia, after enumerating all the books of the Old and New Testament *which should be READ in churches*, omit the Apocalypse, and the Apocalypse alone \*." But the conclusion which he draws from the tacit omission does not hold good, if this interpretation be granted. I shall therefore proceed to the testimony of Sulpicius Severus, with whom I am myself more especially concerned.

XXI. " We may learn," says Mr. Gibbon, " from the complaint of Sulpicius Severus, that the sentence (of the Laodicean council) had been ratified by the greater number of Christians of his time †." I luckily discovered in Sulpicius the passage to which our Historian alludes, which contains *no such complaint*, nor any *ratification* of such a sentence. I observed also, that " the original word *plerique*," which is translated by him the *greater number*, cannot have this import here ; and gave a proof from *Quintilian*, that *plerique* does not always imply a *majority* ‡. But Mr. G. in his *Vindication*, most wittily replies, " I am found guilty of supposing *plerique* to signify *the greater number* ; whereas Mr. Davis, with Stephens's dictionary in his hand, is able to prove that *plerique* has not *always* that extensive meaning, and that a classic of good authority has used the word in a much more limited and qualified sense §."

My reader, surely, will not think my translation of this passage unfaithful, when he knows that Dr. Lardner gives it the same turn ; " He (Sulpicius Severus) says, that *John*, the Apostle and

\* Vind. p. 37.

† Note 65. c. xv.

‡ Exam. p. 40—42.

§ Vind. p. 35.

" Evangelist,

" Evangelist, was banished by *Domitian* into the  
 " isle *Patmos*, where he had visions, and where he  
 " wrote the book of the Revelation; which is,  
 " either foolishly or wickedly rejected by *many* \*."

Beside this, it is impossible to set aside his  
 sneer more fully, or confirm my former assertion  
 more strongly, than by proving to my reader, that  
 having carefully collected from the works of Sul-  
 picius several passages in which the word *plerique*  
 occurs, I find that he *generally* uses it in this limited  
 sense; for there are a number of passages where it  
 must of necessity be taken so, and a still greater  
 number that will admit of it. Some of which, and  
 references to more, the reader may see in my  
 notes †.

It

\* *Credibility*, vol. xi. p. 11, 12. Sulp. Severus, *Hist.*  
*Sacr.* l. ii. cap. 31. al. 45.

† " Hujus (Cham) filius, Chus nomine, Nembrod gi-  
 gantem genuit: à quo Babylon civitas constructa traditur.  
*Plerique* etiam oppida ea tempestate condita memorantur, &c."  
*Sacr. Hist.* l. i. p. 8. 12mo. Elzevir. ed. 1656.

" Media hyeme, quæ solito asperior inhorruerat, adeo ut  
*plerisque* vis alioris extingueret." Vita Martin. c. ii. p. 218.

There is one particular instance where Sulpicius Severus  
 himself explains the word.

" *Plerique* mortales studio gloriæ sæcularis inaniter dediti,  
 exinde perennem (ut putabant) memoriam nominis sui quæ-  
 siverunt, si vitas clarorum virorum stylo illustrassent." The  
 sense is carried on, and in the next page this *plerique* is ex-  
 pressed by the very word *multos*.—" Siquidem ad solam ho-  
 minum memoriam se perpetuandos crediderunt; cum hominis  
 officium sit, perennem potius vitam, quam perennem memo-  
 riam, querere, non scribendo, aut pugnando, vel philoso-  
 phando, sed pie, sancte, religioseque vivendo. Qui quidem  
 error humanus, literis traditus, in tantum valuit, ut *multos*  
 plane æmulos vel inania philosophiæ vel stultæ illius virtutis  
 invenerit."

Vita Martini. Prologus, p. 215. See also Sulp. Sever.  
 l. i. p. 38. (and the passage in 1 Sam. c. ii. to which it  
 alludes.)

It avails little then for Mr. G. to say, that “ he stands under the protection of the general usage of the Latin language ;” for it was much altered long before Sulpicius Severus wrote, and we are to judge of the author’s sense of a word from the signification in which he generally uses it himself. But we have reason to suspect that our Historian before only consulted *Abauzit* ; in that case he could have no knowledge of this argument, and was not aware that it might be so forcibly brought against him.

He seems now to have looked a little further into this matter : for in his *Vindication* he says, “ the Ecclesiastical history of the fourth century illustrates and justifies this obvious interpretation \*.”—“ May I not affirm, on the authority of St. Jerom, that the Apocalypse was generally rejected by the Greek churches ? Quod si eam (the Epistle to the Hebrews) Latinorum consuetudo non recipit inter Scripturas Canonicas ; nec Græcorum Ecclesiæ Apocalypsim Johannis eadem libertate suscipiunt. Et tamen nos

alludes.) p. 96, p. 100, p. 113, p. 45. 59. 74. Vita Martin. c. vii. p. 226. xxv. p. 240. 244. Ibid. Ep. i. Ep. ii. p. 250. Dialog. i. p. 274, p. 277. ii. p. 305. iii. p. 313.

\* Another objection against the Apocalypse, which Mr. G. borrowed from *Abauzit* (note 152, c. xv.) respecting “ the Alogians, who disputed its genuineness because the church of Thyatira was not yet founded ;” is now set aside by the ingenuity of Dr. Burgh. He shews, that “ this was not the reason that the Alogians rejected it : otherwise they could hardly have ascribed it to the pen of Cerinthus, who was the contemporary of St. John—and that Epiphanius only allows the fact for the sake of retorting their own argument on themselves : and concludes, that *the church of Thyatira was founded* when St. John wrote the second chapter of the Apocalypse.” See Burgh’s Inquiry into the belief of the first Christians, p. 75.

“ utramque

“ utramque suscipimus, nequaquam hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum auctoritatem sequentes \*.”

No, good Sir! you may not so affirm. The clause “ nec Græcorum Ecclesiæ, &c.” may be true if *some* of the churches rejected the Apocalypse; if they doubted, hesitated, or shewed some reluctance in admitting it; did not receive it with the same *freedom*, and entire satisfaction as those books whose authenticity had never been questioned. This seems to be the meaning: yet I will so far grant, that perhaps the words *may* be understood thus: “ neither do the Greek churches, by the same liberty (i. e. by using the liberty of judging and determining the canon of Scripture) receive these books.” But I appeal to the reader, if this sense is not more forced and elliptical. It is more natural to suppose *Jerom* is speaking of the age after the authority of the Apocalypse, and the

\* Vind. p. 37. Hieronym. Epist. ad Dardanum, tom. iii. p. 68.—There still remain evident traces that our author follows Abauzit’s discourse on the Apocalypse; for the substance of his observations, added in the *Vindication*, appears to be taken from this fountain-head of his intelligence.—Abauzit says, “ *Les Eglises Grecques*, dit-il (S. jerom) *ne reçoivent point l’Apocalypse*; & cette prévention étoit si fort “ à la mode, qu’il l’appelle *la coutume de son siècle*.” Sect. 88.

Il (St. Augustin) faisoit dépendre l’autorité des Livres Sacrés, non seulement du nombre, mais aussi de la grandeur & de la majesté des Eglises Chrétiennes qui les avoient reçus, &c. Sect. 85. p. 299.

Est ce qu’il cherchoit le nombre, la grandeur, la majesté des Eglises, pour se déterminer? Tout cela se trouvoit dans les Eglises *Grecques*, pour le moins autant que dans les *Latines*. Sect. 86, p. 301. Discours historique sur l’Apocalypse.

And again.—L’Apocalypse s’introduisoit ainsi peu à peu, sur-tout depuis que le faux Denys Areopagite, qui la mettoit au rang des Livres Sacrés, commençoit à passer chés les Grecs pour le véritable Denys. S. Maxime, dans le septième siècle fit fort valoir cet auteur; &c. *ibid.*, p. 315.

epistle



epistle to the Hebrews had been doubted; “ *but we, says he, following the authority of the primitive ages*” (before such disputes began,) “ *receive both of them.*”

On the contrary, that the Apocalypse was *not generally rejected* by the Greek churches, we can prove from more positive evidence than a single and ambiguous clause; I mean from *the numerous testimonies of the Greek as well as the Latin Fathers*, as Mr. Gibbon has already been told by Dr. Chelsum, *in favour of the authenticity of this book* \*. Among other learned authorities, he was referred to the third Pastoral Letter of Bp. Gibson; but as he still refuses to listen to this admonition, or has neglected to consult such weighty evidence, I shall produce, for the satisfaction of my reader, the citations of the learned Prelate.

“ *Irenæus*, who mentions it as the Revelation of “ *St. John the Disciple of our Lord* †; “ *Justin Martyr* ‡, “ *Eusebius* §, “ *Clemens Alexandrinus* ||, “ *Fertullian*, who cites it under the name “ *of John the Apostle* \*\*; and “ *Origen*, where he “ *speaks of the banishment of John the brother of James* into the island *Patmos*, “ *speaks also of the revelation there made to him, and cites the book* “ *under his name* ††.”

To this respectable body, we may add those whom Dr. *Mill* quotes, as ranking the Apocalypse

\* Remarks, p. 60, &c.

† Irenæus, l. iv. c. 37. 50. l. v. c. 26.

‡ Dialog. Tryph. xx.

§ Hist. Eccles. l. iii. c. 18.

|| Ibid. l. iii. c. 23. (Pædag. l. ii. c. 12. Strom. vi. p. 867.)

\*\* De Præscript. c. 36. contr. Marcion. l. iv. c. 37.

†† Comment. Matth. p. 417.

among

among the canonical books \* : namely, *Theophilus Antiochenus* †, *Papias* ‡, *Melito* §, *Apollonius* ||, *Cyprian* \*\*, *Hilarius*, *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, *Dionysius Areopagita*, *Gregorius Nyssenus*, *Ambrosius*, *Augustinus*, *Paires concilii Carthaginensis*, and others whom I need not mention particularly by name.

I shall therefore conclude from all these testimonies, that both the Greek and Latin churches received the Apocalypse into the sacred Canon, long before the *sixth* century, on better grounds than the authority of Mr. G.'s impostor.

XXII. We have seen what little reason our Historian had for assigning *imposture* as the cause of the reception of the Apocalypse in the Greek church. I shall proceed to shew that he is equally unfair in stating the motives which induced the Council of Trent to fix the seal of their infallibility on this book. He says, " A just apprehension that the Grammarians might become more important than the Theologians, engaged the Council of Trent to fix the seal of their infallibility on all the books of scripture, contained in the Latin Vulgate, in the number of which, the Apocalypse was fortunately included ††." What could any reader conclude from this last sentence, but that the fate of the Apocalypse depended upon the council's decree concerning the Vulgate. I cannot but think our author meant that it should be so understood.

\* Mill's edition of the Greek Testament, in the notes before the Apocalypse.

† Euseb. Hist. Eccles. iv. 24.

‡ Ibid. l. iii. 39.

§ Ibid. l. iv. c. 26.

|| Ibid. l. v. c. 18.

\*\* De bono pudicit, xxii. 9.

†† Note 65, c. xv.

But

But unfortunately for him there is no ground for it.

I must in my turn beg that the reader will peruse that *incomparable Historian* Father Paul. He will find in him that the council had *two distinct things* under consideration; as the state of the case will fully explain. *Brent*, in his translation, says,

“ Order was taken that in the points of doctrine  
“ to be decided, articles should be extracted out  
“ of the books of the Lutherans contrary to the  
“ orthodox faith, to be studied and *censured* by the  
“ divines \*.”

In consequence, *five* articles were drawn out. With the condemnation of the second and third only we are concerned.

II. “ That among the books of the old Testament, none should be reckoned but those that  
“ have been received by the Jews, and in the  
“ New, the six Epistles, that is, under the name  
“ of St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, that of St. James,  
“ the 2d of St. Peter, the 2d and 3d of St. John,  
“ one of St. Jude, and the *Apocalypse*.”

III. “ That to understand the Scripture well,  
“ or to allege the proper words, it is necessary to  
“ have recourse to the texts of the original tongue  
“ in which it is written, and to reprove the Latin  
“ translation.”

In debating on the *second* article; “ they all  
“ agreed in this, that a catalogue should be made  
“ (as in former times) of the canonical books, in  
“ which all should be registered which are read in  
“ the *Roman* church, even those of the Old Testa-

\* *Brent's Translation of Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent*, l. ii. p. 141. fol. ed. Lond. 1676.

“ *Fù preso ordine, &c. Hist. del Concil. Tridentino Di Pietro Soave Polano*, l. ii. p. 145, fol. Lond. 1619.

“ ment,

“ ment, which were never received by the Hebrews \*.”

“ There were four different opinions on the article : but the one which was *approved of by the majority, was to make no distinction at all* † ; (as to establishing the three ranks which were proposed, of those books which always have been held for divine: those whereof sometimes doubt hath been made, but by use have obtained canonical authority ; in which number was the Apocalypse : and those of which there hath never been any assurance) *but to imitate the council of Carthage and others, making the catalogue, and saying no more* ‡.”

It appears from the history, that in the four different methods proposed to make the catalogue of the Scriptures, the Apocalypse is included (virtually at least) in every one. The first does not expressly mention it, but necessarily implies it. The second method mentions the Apocalypse expressly ; and supplies what the first mentions only generally. And in the two last it is undoubtedly included.

How groundless therefore is Mr. Gibbon's remark that, “ *I have ONLY mistaken a motion of the opposition for a measure of the administration, &c.* §” since it appears from Father Paul, that even the administration as well as the oppo-

“ \* Nel 2° articolo le opinioni furono conformi in questo, &c. p. 148.

† Il Di 15, proposte le tre formule, se ben ciascuna ebbe chi la sostenne, la terza però fu approvata dalla maggior parte, p. 150.

‡ Altri riputavano meglio non far alcuna distinzione, ma imitare il Concilio Cartaginese, & gli altri, ponendo il Catalogo senza dire più parole.

§ Vind. p. 37.

sition

sition never had the least idea of rejecting the Apocalypse.

I indeed pointed out, in my *Examination*, the second proposal, which was advanced, but which was not adopted; for to me it appeared to give a more plain account of their intentions, and the reason of their proceedings.

It is plain then how much Mr. Gibbon has mistaken the *sagacious Historian*. But he adds, "the judicious Le Courayer, who had studied his author—considers this *ridiculous* reason as the most powerful argument which influenced the debates of the council \*."

Give me leave to ask our author, what debates they were which, as Courayer says, this powerful argument influenced? Does he agree with our Roman Historian, and assign this fear of the superiority of the Grammarians *as the cause of the reception of the Apocalypse in the Roman church*? No such thing; Mr. G. has falsely quoted him. As he judiciously studied Father Paul, he confines this motive to the influence it had in causing the Fathers to prefer the Vulgate translation to the original: his words are, "The fear that the Grammarians should make themselves arbiters of the truths of religion does not prevent an original from being preferable to a translation; but it was however this reason which principally influenced the Fathers of the Council to determine in favour of a translation †."

I appeal

\* Vind. p. 38.

† I have given the whole note from Courayer.—"Ces nouveaux Grammairiens jeteroient de la confusion par tout, &c." Ces sortes de raisons populaires, qui réellement n'ont aucune solidité, sont pourtant ordinairement celles qui ont le plus d'influence dans les décisions. La crainte de voir des Grammairiens s'eriger en Juges des veritez de la Religion

I appeal to my reader, if Mr. G. has not evidently mistaken or misrepresented the sense of this note. As he hastily consulted this author, he met a sentence that seemed to favour his hypothesis, but forgot that it related to a different article. We cannot but lament his superficial mode of compiling history; surely if he had himself more sagaciously studied the council, or more judiciously read Courayer, he could not have fallen into this ridiculous blunder.

Having closed the debates on the *second* article, and settled *the catalogue of the canonical books of Scripture*; among which we find they all agreed unanimously to rank the *Apocalypse*; they proceeded to discuss the *third* article, respecting the *Vulgate* or Latin translation of the Scriptures.—Here, and not before, came on the contest between the Grammarians and the Theologians. The Grammarians contended for their Latin translation being compared with the Hebrew and Greek originals; the divines opposed this measure. However, “the difficulties were not so great, says F. Paul, but that the *vulgar* edition was approved almost by a general consent; the discourse (the argument) having made deep impression in their minds, That Grammarians would take upon them to teach bishops and divines.

As a still stronger proof that these were two different and distinct considerations we may ob-

Religion n'empêche pas qu'un original ne soit préférable à des Traductions; mais c'est pourtant ce qui a principalement déterminé les Pères du Concile à juger en faveur d'une Traduction, de peur de laisser prendre aux Grammairiens une autorité que les Evêques, qui ne sont pas toujours les plus habiles, craignoient de trouver très préjudiciable à la leur.” Courayer Hist. du Concile de Trente, tom. i. p. 245.

serve,

serve, that there were two separate decrees established, and afterwards published, in the session, on these articles : “ The decree concerning the canonical Scriptures, and the decree of the edition and use of the sacred books \*.”

Thus Mr. G. has confounded together, what should have been kept separate ; if we are to determine by the relation of Father Paul, to which he himself appeals—and I leave it to the reader to judge if his representation of this matter does not discover more of the fallacy of a sophist, then the plain and manly truth of an Historian.

By Mr. Gibbon's remark, that the Apocalypse was *fortunately* included among the books of Scripture contained in the Latin Vulgate, it is plain he would convey to his reader the idea, that it's reception into the canon depended on it's having a place there.

But how can this insinuation have any weight, when we find the Apocalypse in the several editions of the Greek Testament published before the council of Trent in 1546 †, and consequently before

\* *Decretum de canonicis scripturis,*” &c.

“ Sacrorum vero librorum indicem huic decreto adscribendum censuit, ne cui dubitatio suboriri possit, quinam sint, qui ab ipsa Synodo suscipiantur. Sunt vero infrascripti testamenti veteris, Genesis, &c. Testamenti novi, quatuor evangelia, &c.—& *Apocalypsis* Joannis Apostoli,” &c.

“ *Decretum de editione & usu sacrorum librorum.*” —“ Insuper eadem sacrosancta Synodus,—statuit & declarat, ut hæc ipsa vetus & *vulgata editio*, quæ longo tot sæculorum usu in ipsa ecclesia probata est,—pro authentica habeatur ; & ut nemo illam rejicere quovis prætextu audeat vel præsumat, &c.”

Concilii Tridentini General. Sessio, iv. A. C. 1546.—Concil. tom. 35, p. 387, 388, ed. Paris, Regia, 1644.

† Bibliotheca sacra, at the end of Calmet's Dictionary, vol. iii. part 3, art ix.—Novum Testamentum Græcè—in Polyglottis

fore the decree which preferred the Vulgate could have any influence.

We know it was universally received in the Latin church long before the council of Trent; and therefore at a time when the interested motive which he assigns, had it been true, could not have contributed towards its reception. But I have already shewn that such a motive is void of foundation, and our author's attempt to invalidate the authenticity of this book is baffled even by the arguments which he has himself advanced.

Let us now see what reason he is pleased to give for the reception of the Apocalypse in the *Protestant* churches. "The advantage," (he says) "of turning those mysterious prophecies against the see of Rome, inspired the Protestants with uncommon veneration for so useful an ally."

To the honour of our reformers it may be said, that so ignominious a reason for the insertion of this book in the canon of Scripture is utterly without ground. They were men of too much virtue and moderation, and were too great lovers of truth, to act upon such motives. I may say the same of their successors, both clergy and laity; they have met the adversaries of the book upon the proper ground of controversy, and have maintained its authenticity with such arguments as will not give way to the cavils of this gentleman. Our reformers found this book in all the editions of the Greek Testament published to their time, and every translation of it from Wicliff to the Reformation. And we may add, that it had been full as

Polyglottis Complutensibus ann. 1514, editum, sed publicatum duntaxat post ann. 1522.—Erasmo Roterod. recognitum, 1516.—Aldi et Aufulani—Venetiis, 1518.—Colinzi, 1545.—Robert. Stephani, 1546.

G

fortunate



fortunate for the church of Rome had the Apocalypse not been included in the Vulgate.

As Mr. G. has thought fit on this occasion to appeal to "the ingenious and elegant discourses" of the present Bishop of Lichfield on that *unpromising* subject; I cannot better conclude this head, than in the words of the learned Prelate.—(Serm. x. vol. ii. p. 111.)

"As to the *authority* of this extraordinary book (although the discussion of this point be foreign to my present purpose) it may be proper to acquaint such persons, as have not made the enquiry for themselves, and are perhaps incapable of making it, with the sentiments, which our ablest writers have entertained of it."

"Mr. Mede, a capable inquirer, if there ever was any, (having no *vanity* to indulge—with no *interest* in view—with no *spleen* to gratify) says roundly—The Apocalypse hath more human (not to speak of *divine*) authority, than any other book of the New Testament besides, even from the time it was first delivered." (Works, p. 602.)

—And to the same purpose, *Sir Isaac Newton*,—"I do not find any other book of the New Testament so strongly attested, or commented upon so early, as this of the Apocalypse." *Observations on Daniel*, &c, p. 249.

"Thus, these two incomparable men. What some minute critics have said, or insinuated, to the contrary, is not worth mentioning; farther, than just to observe, that, if the authority of this momentous book be indeed questionable, the church of Rome could hardly have failed long since to make the discovery, or to triumph in it.

*Hæc Ithacus velit, et magno mercentur Atridæ."*

I have now closed the several heads under which I proposed to rank the articles brought in question by Mr. Gibbon; but I have another class still to add, *of those which he has not attempted to confute*, contenting himself with saying, "the few imputations which I have neglected are still more palpably false, or still more evidently trifling\*."

To shew what little credit is due to this assertion, I have drawn out a catalogue of the MISREPRESENTATIONS charged upon him in my *Examination*, to which he makes no reply in his *Vindication*, amounting only to the *small number of twenty-nine*. But to avoid repetition, I must refer the reader, who wishes to be satisfied of their truth and importance, to my former work. I must however beg leave to ask Mr. Gibbon, how it is possible, that, "in every assault, my weapons have fallen dead and lifeless to the ground; when there are so many, which I shall consider as successful, which he has not even attempted to repel†."

\* Vind. p. 80.

† As Mr. Gibbon has thought it worthy his notice to censure a slip of the pen, as a proof of *my bad English*; I shall in turn desire him to correct the *inconsistency* of the two members of this period. He tells his readers, "in every assault, my weapons have fallen dead and lifeless to the ground;" but, unfortunately for me, *they come to life again*; and "have more than once recoiled and dangerously wounded the unskilful hand that had presumed to use them." May not this be justly called an *artful carelessness*?

*Mr. GIBBON'S Misrepresentations of Authors.*

	Pages.
1 Instance from the Universal History, — } 13.	
6 Instances from Tertullian, 25, 33, 34, 36, 37.	
With the note * — 39.	
4 from Cyprian, — 47, 53, 109, 110.	
2 — Origen, — 53, 60.	
5 — Eusebius, — 60, 61, 63, 66, 70.	
2 — Lactantius, — 77, 80.	
1 — Epictetus, — 84.	
1 — Marcus Antoninus, 86.	
2 — Grotius, — 91, 95.	
1 — Bossuet, — 98.	
1 — Le Clerc — 102.	
1 — Du Pin, — 132.	
1 — Tillemont, — 138.	
1 — Lord Lyttelton, — 140.	

29

So that upon the whole, the balance stands thus :

First class, containing those instances in which I have been mistaken, —	8
Second class, those in which I have erred in some subordinate point, but wherein the main charge is right, — —	8
Third class, those attempted by Mr. G. but which I cannot be so polite as to give up, —	23
Fourth class, those which he has not attempted, —	29

Total 68

From this table it appears, that I have been convicted of only *eight* trifling mistakes out of *sixty-eight* instances ; so that there are still remaining *sixty* substantial proofs of *misrepresentation*, which Mr. G. with all his artifice and plausibility will find difficult to confute.

I might

I might have easily lengthened out the detail of his MISREPRESENTATIONS and INACCURACIES from the large compilations I have by me : but satisfied that I have sufficiently established my charge, I need not intrude any longer on my reader's patience.

The judicious Mr. *Baker* has an observation respecting modern Historians, which, though I would not extend it to all in general, as he has done, may with the strictest propriety be applied to the *Historian of the Roman Empire*.

“ I scarce ever met with any Historian who  
 “ does not write true History, if you will take  
 “ an account of him from his *Preface*, and *not be*  
 “ *too nice in examining his book* : the first pages are  
 “ usually filled with the care and integrity of the  
 “ author, which, possibly, are to be found no  
 “ where else †.”

Now that I have gone through these several unconnected passages, in which our Historian has had recourse to misrepresentation ; I shall beg leave to consider his groundless and malevolent assertions respecting THE JEWISH NATION and RELIGION more fully and minutely : for Mr. Gibbon in his *Vindication* still persists in his former account of them, and attempts to justify his confused and unfair narrative. Slips of memory, involuntary mistakes, and even errors of judgment, may be entitled to some candour and allowance. But subtle and deceitful glosses, false colouring, and wilful mistakes obstinately defended, admit of no excuse.

### INTOLERANCE OF POLYTHEISM.

The zeal, the *intolerant zeal of the Jews*, to which the equally intolerant zeal of the *Christians*

† *Baker's Reflections upon Learning*, c. x. p. 127.

succeeded, is assigned by Mr. Gibbon as the first cause of the rapid progress of Christianity. Dr. Watson has ably pointed out the insufficiency of this cause ; or rather, shewn that it would necessarily impede, instead of facilitating its progress \*. My province is to animadvert upon the facts which our Historian has advanced, and his manner of stating them. And I shall be able to confute, by the most convincing testimonies, his account of the *mild* genius of Polytheism ; and thereby prove that the intolerance which he ascribes only to the *Jewish* nation and law, is most directly applicable to other people and other legislatures. The discussion of this question is of the utmost importance ; for, if Mr. G.'s representation is well-founded, it will follow, that Polytheism or idolatry is preferable to Theism, or the worship of the one true God. To prejudice, if not subvert Christianity, is the design of those who have supported the argument ; they have all inadvertently betrayed, or openly avowed, the intent ; nor can we consider Mr. Gibbon to be more friendly to Christianity than Collins, or Hume †.

Our

\* Mr. Smyth Loftus published a supplement, or continuation of Dr. Watson's apology, entitled, *A Reply to the Reasonings of Mr. Gibbon, &c.* but Mr. G. has omitted to take notice of him among those adversaries "whom he salutes with gentle courtesy, or stern defiance."

† "The intolerance of almost all the religions, says Mr. Hume, which have maintained the unity of God, is as remarkable as the contrary principle of Polytheists. The implacable narrow spirit of the *Jews*, is well known, &c.—And if among Christians, the *English* and *Dutch* have embraced the principles of toleration, this singularity has proceeded from the steady resolution of the civil magistrate, in opposition to the continued efforts of priests and bigots."

"Idolatry is attended with this evident advantage, that by limiting the powers and functions of its deities, it naturally admits the Gods of other sects and nations, to a share of

Our author begins with this remarkable assertion—"We have already described the religious harmony of the ancient world; and the facility with which the most different and even hostile nations embraced, or at least respected, each other's superstitions †." He says, that he has described; but his descriptions are too like his proofs. Whatever can be warped to his purpose, is introduced; and every thing which makes against him is omitted. As to the religious harmony of the ancient world, nothing of this nature can be inferred from history. In many nations there remained more or less an indifference and disregard about foreign rites; which afforded an opportunity to persons devoted to superstition, to make innovations in the popular system, and privately to introduce a new mode of worship. Hence foreign rites were sometimes tolerated. There are however many

of divinity; and renders all the various deities, as well as rites, ceremonies, or traditions, compatible with each other." On the other hand;—"While one sole object of devotion is acknowledged, the worship of other deities is regarded as absurd and impious.—As each sect is positive that its own faith and worship are entirely acceptable to the Deity;—the several sects fall naturally into animosity, and mutually discharge on each other that sacred zeal and rancour, the most furious and implacable of all human passions.—The tolerating spirit of idolaters, both in ancient and modern times, is very obvious," &c. *Natural History of Religion*, Sect. ix. 8vo. ed.

Mr. Gibbon says,—“The superstition of the people was not embittered by any mixture of theological rancour; nor was it confined by the chains of any speculative system. The devout polytheist, though fondly attached to his national rites, admitted with implicit faith the different religions of the earth.” *Decline and Fall*, p. 30.

“Reasoners of such a cast were scarcely inclined to wrangle about their respective modes of faith, or of worship.” *Ibid.* p. 32.

† *Decline and Fall*, p. 451.

instances of their being execrated and banished : feuds also and seditions arose on that account ; so that this general correspondence and concord in reality never existed. What agreement was there between the Persians and the people of Egypt, when Cambyfes entered that country, and slew the priests, and ruined their temples ? Or, in still more ancient times, when the Arabian shepherds made an inroad into the same kingdom, and demolished the temples and altars : and bitterly persecuted the people ? If we may trust the accounts of the natives, the tyranny of these foreigners, and their cruelty, was beyond all example : and the whole proceeded from a detestation of the popular religion. Cambyfes was not content with the desolation which he brought upon Egypt ; but purposed to have penetrated to the famous temple of Ammon ; and to have laid that also in ruins ; but he failed in the attempt. Both the Arabians and the Persians esteemed their own rites as more pure and refined than those of the Egyptians ; which they looked upon as base, and not to be suffered. The Egyptians were not on their side at all more tolerant ; as we may learn from their tearing a Roman soldier to pieces for killing a cat ; also by their separating themselves from others ; and thinking themselves contaminated, if they drank out of the same cup, or eat at the same board. Hence we may too often find among nations a religious abhorrence, instead of universal harmony. When Xerxes invaded the Grecians, the same antipathy to the national worship took place as had before manifested itself in his grandfather Cambyfes. In consequence of this, his path might be marked, both in Greece and Ionia, by the altars and temples, and even cities, which he

he demolished \*. It is plain therefore, that Mr. Gibbon had little reason to assert, that “such  
“ was the mild spirit of antiquity, that the nations  
“ were less attentive to the difference, than to the  
“ resemblance, of their religious worship †.”

Nor was this disagreement only between nation and nation: the sentiments of people varied in each particular country. Some acquiesced in that mode of worship, which had been transmitted to them: others of a warmer zeal thought it might be enriched and improved by the admission of additional rites, and foreign mysteries. Hence innovations in religion were sometimes privately introduced even in Greece and Rome. But these improvements did not always succeed. So far from being readily and cordially embraced, they were many times execrated, and with detestation abolished. The Athenians had a law which prohibited the introduction of foreign deities; and though they were sometimes admitted, there are instances when they were despised and laughed at; and at last banished. An example to this purpose is to be found in the history of Aristophanes, who by his wit drove a herd of strange deities out of the city, as we are informed by Cicero. “*Novos vero Deos*  
“ *sic Aristophanes, facetissimus poeta veteris Co-*  
“ *mœdia, vexat, ut apud eum Sabazius, et qui-*  
“ *dam alii Dii, peregrini judicati, é civitate ejici-*  
“ *antur ‡.*” So far from embracing foreign rites with such an easy indifference, both the Athenians and Romans had laws to prevent their introduction.  
“ *Cautum fuerat et apud Athenienses et apud Ro-*

\* See Pausanias, l. vii. p. 533, and l. x. p. 837. Xerxes burnt all the temples in Ionia, except that at Ephesus. Strabo, l. xiv. p. 941.

† Decline and Fall, ch. li. p. 30.

‡ De legibus.

“ *manos*



“manos ne quis novas religiones introduceret \*.”  
St. Paul was accused on this head, as being ξενῶν  
δαίμονων καταγγελεὺς †.

“The Roman laws,” says a judicious writer ‡,  
“were no less clear and severe in this respect.—  
“*Strange Gods shall not be worshiped. Deos pere-*  
“*grinos ne colunto.* Does a tolerating government  
“express itself thus?”

“But this is not all. Follow the history of this  
“great people, and you will find the same prohi-  
“bitions given by the senate in the year of Rome  
“325 §, and the Ediles charged to see to the  
“execution of them; these prohibitions renewed  
“in the year 529 ||; the Ediles severely rebuked  
“for having neglected these orders and superior  
“magistrates appointed to have the laws better  
“executed. Many decrees of Pontiffs, and Se-  
“natus consultums without number, against new  
“worship, quoted to the senate in 566 \*\*, and a  
“strange worship proscribed in 623 ††.”

“This

\* Servius in *Æneid.* l. viii. ver. 187.

† Act. Apost. c. xvii. v. 18.

‡ Author of the Letters of certain Jews to Mr. de Voltaire,  
vol. i. p. 270, &c.

§ “Nec corpora modo affecta tabo, Sed animos quoque  
“multiplex religio & pleraque externa invasit;—donec pub-  
“licus jam pudor ad primores civitatis pervenit.—Datum  
“inde negotium Ædilibus ut animadverterent, ne qui, nisi  
“Romani Dii, neu quo alio more, quam patrio colerentur.”  
Vid. Liv. lib. iv. n. 30.

|| Liv. l. xxv. n. 5.

\*\* “Quoties patrum avorumque ætate negotium hoc magi-  
“stratibus datum, ut sacra externa fieri vetarent omnemque  
“disciplinam sacrificandi præterquam more Romano abole-  
“rent?” Liv. lib. xxxix. n. 16.

†† “The worship of Jupiter Sabasius. With regard to  
“this worship, the wise Rollin observes, *That in every pe-*  
“*riod instances may be seen of the attention of the Romans to*  
“*keep off new sorts of superstition.* And Mr. de Voltaire  
“asserts

“ This intolerance was continued under the em-  
 “ perors ; witness the \* counsels of Mecænas to  
 “ Augustus against those who should introduce, or  
 “ honour in Rome, other gods than those of the  
 “ empire. Witness the Egyptian superstitions,  
 “ proscribed under this emperor, and under Ti-  
 “ berius ; the Jews banished if they would not re-  
 “ nounce their religion. But witness, above all,  
 “ the Christians driven into exile, stripped of their  
 “ property, and given up for so long a time, and  
 “ in such great numbers, to the most cruel tor-  
 “ ment, not for their crimes, but their religion,  
 “ under Nero, Domitian, Maximian, Diocletian ;  
 “ &c. &c. even under Trajan and Marcus Aure-  
 “ lius, &c.”

But were one not to lay a stress on these proofs of intolerance and persecution, we find that instead of acceding to the worship of strange gods, many people were very doubtful and indifferent about the Deities of their own country. Others looked upon them with absolute contempt, and had them in derision. Such were Protagoras of Abdera, Theodorus Cyrenaicus, and Diagoras the Melian : such also Epicurus, and his numerous followers : and above all others, Lucian. It is

“ asserts in twenty places, coolly and without exception,  
 “ that the Romans tolerated and permitted all kinds of wor-  
 “ ship !”

\* “ We think it proper to lay before the reader, in full, this passage of the historian. We shall translate it literally from the Greek text. “ *Honour the Gods with care, says Mecænas to Augustus, according to the customs of your fathers, and COMPEL others to honour them. HATE those who innovate in religion ; and PUNISH them, not only because of the Gods, be that despises them has no respect for any thing, but because they who introduce new Gods, prevail on many persons to follow strange laws, and that from thence arise associations by oath, cabals, parties, all things dangerous in a monarchy. Suffer no atheists nor magicians.*” Dion Cassius, lib. 42.

said

said of Nero, “ Religionum usque quaque contemp-  
 “ tor præter unius Deæ Syriæ. Hanc mox ita spre-  
 “ vit, ut urinâ contaminaret \*.” The rites of  
 Isis by degrees got footing at Rome: but seem  
 by most to have been held in detestation. Cicero  
 complains of the priests, and says of them,—“ do-  
 “ mos exhaurire et urbem superstitione implere †.”  
 Arnobius takes notice of the impurity of their  
 worship, and particularly,—“ de stupris inter aras  
 “ et delubra conductis ‡.” These rites had been  
 unhappily restored in the times when he wrote,  
 after they had been abolished in the consulship of  
 Piso and Gabinius§. Tiberius prohibited all ex-  
 otic ceremonies; and particularly those from  
 Egypt and Judæa: “ Externas cæremonias,  
 “ Ægyptios, Judaicosque ritus, compescuit ||.”  
 Those from Egypt were too base and contemptible  
 to be countenanced. Those from Judæa seemed  
 to him inconsistent with the ancient national wor-  
 ship. They were, in short, quite opposite to  
 Polytheism and idolatry; and therefore could not  
 be admitted. Virgil shews very little respect to  
 the whole tribe of Egyptian deities; whom he  
 comprehends under the title of “ Omnigenum  
 “ Deum monstra; to which he adds, “ latrator Anu-  
 “ bis.” Upon this Servius observes—“ Monstra  
 “ dixit, quia necdum sub Augusto Ægyptiaca  
 “ sacra Romani receperant: et Varro, Alexandri-  
 “ nos Deos coli indignatur \*\*.” From hence we  
 may learn, that however innovations may have

\* Sueton. in Neron. c. 56.

† De legibus.

‡ Tertullian likewise complains—“ In templis adulteria  
 “ componi, inter aras lenocinia tractari.” Apologet.  
 See also Ovid. Amor. lib. ii. Eleg. 2. ver. 25.

§ Valerius Maximus. lib. 4.

|| Sueton. in Tiberio. c. 56.

\*\* In Æneid. lib. viii. 698.

crept

crept in, yet they were not introduced with that ease, nor received with that universal respect, which the Author pretends. Indeed there were laws to the contrary; and Dionysius Halicarnassensis commends the policy of the Romans in prohibiting foreign worship.

Mr. Gibbon quotes the testimony of this Historian, when he tells us, that "Rome was incessantly filled with subjects and strangers, who all introduced and enjoyed the favourite superstitions of their native country:" but he keeps back from our sight that part which does not suit with his purpose of setting forth the *easy indifference* of the Romans to religious worship. Dionysius is speaking in his second book of the institutions which Romulus made for the government of his state.

A due reverence for the gods is made the foundation on which the virtues of temperance, justice, and fortitude, which preserve and adorn a state, are grounded\*. In the celebration of feasts and sacrifices, he rejected the vile and profane fables of the Greeks, and purged his religious ceremonies from the abominable rites which debased the worship of other foreign nations†. But if this does not indicate that indifference and universal respect which our author insists upon, much less do the following words of this Historian—

"What I most of all admire, says Dionysius, is, that although innumerable nations come to this city, (Rome) who necessarily worship their gods after the manner of their country; yet *no foreign worships are imitated by the state, so as to be received in public*: but if any sacred rites

\* Πρωτην μὴν παρα τῶν Θεῶν εὐνοίαν, &c. P. 87.

† Εὐλαδὺς ἀπαντὰ πρᾶττομεν τε καὶ λεγόμεθα τὰ περὶ τῶν Θεῶν ὥς ἔτε παρ' Ἑλλήσιν, ἔτε παρὰ βαρβάροις.

" are

“ are introduced by the command of the oracles,  
 “ such as are the rites of Idæa, they are worshipped  
 “ in their own form, and every fabulous supersti-  
 “ tion is rejected \*.

Accordingly we read, that “ though the Præ-  
 “ tors dedicated yearly feasts and games to the ho-  
 “ nour of this goddess, yet the rites were per-  
 “ formed by a *Pbrygian* man and woman. For  
 “ *no native of Rome was permitted, by the law*  
 “ *and the decree of the senate, to worship the god-*  
 “ *dess in the Pbrygian customs.* In this prudent  
 “ and cautious manner” continues he, “ does the  
 “ state preterve itself with regard to the *foreign*  
 “ modes of worshipping the gods: and *abstains*  
 “ *from, and despises, every vain and indecent su-*  
 “ *perstition.*”

How can Mr. G. reconcile this with what he  
 says in the same paragraph, “ Rome gradually  
 “ became the common temple of her subjects:  
 “ and the freedom of the city was bestowed on  
 “ all the gods of mankind?”

And although upon the besieging of cities, there

\* Και ὁ παντῶν μαλιστα ἐγὼγε τεθαυμάκα, καίπερ μυρίων ὄσων  
 εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἐληλυθόντων ἐθνῶν, οἷς πολλὴ ἀνάγκη σέβειν τῆς πατρὸς  
 Θεῆς τοῖς οἰκοδὸν νόμοις, ἑδενός εἰς ζῆλον ἐληλυθε τῶν ξενικῶν  
 ἐπιτηδεύματων ἢ πόλις δημοσία, ὃ πολλὰς ἤδη συνέβη παθεῖν, ἀλλὰ  
 καὶ εἰ τίνα κατὰ χреσημὲς ἐπεισηγαγετο ἱερά, τοῖς ἑαυτῆς αὐτὰ  
 τιμὰ νόμοις, ἀπασαν ἐκβάλλουσα τερδρεῖαν μυθικήν, ὥσπερ τὰ τῆς  
 Ἰδαίας ἱερά.

† Θεοσίας μὲν γὰρ αὐτὴ καὶ ἀγῶνας ἀγεῖν ἀνα παῖν ἔτος οἱ  
 στρατηγοὶ κατὰ τῆς Ῥωμαίων νόμου ἱεράται· δε αὐτῆς ἀπὸ Φρυγῆ, καὶ  
 γυνὴ Φρυγία—Ῥωμαίων δὲ τῶν ἀυθιγενῶν—οὔτε (τίς) οργιάζων τὴν  
 Δίον τοῖς Φρυγίοις οργιασμοῖς, κατὰ νόμον ἢ σοφισμα βυλῆς. οὕτως  
 εὐλαδῶς ἢ πόλις ἐχει πρὸς τὰ ἐκ ἐπιχωρίας ἐθῶ περι Θεῶν, καὶ  
 πάντα σπτενυαται τυφόν, ὃ μὴ προσέτι το εὐπρεπές. Dionysius  
 Halicarnass. c. xix. p. 88. fol. ed. Hudson, Oxon, 1704.  
 In the same partial manner has he acted in quoting the tes-  
 timonies of Herodotus, and Polybius, with regard to the  
 nature of Polytheism, and the Roman worship.

was

was among the Romans a solemn invitation for the gods of each place to come over to them, yet there were innumerable deities of this sort, which were never enshrined at Rome. For neither there, nor at Athens, could foreign gods be admitted without a decree of the Senate; or a Permit from the Areopagus. Hence, though they conquered Egypt, yet they did not embrace the worship of Osyris or Orus; nor of Cnes, Bubastis or Thoth: nor did they pay any respect either to the *Ape*, or to the *Onion*. Of this we may be assured from *Juvenal*, who certainly, though he resided in Egypt, was no proselyte to the Egyptian rites, which he sufficiently ridicules.

“ Quis nescit, Volusi Bithynice, qualia demens  
 “ Ægyptus portenta colat? crocodilon adorat  
 “ Pars hæc: illa pavet saturam serpentibus Ibim.  
 “ Effigies sacri nitet aurea cercopithecii.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 “ Porrum et cepe nefas violare ac frangere morsu.  
 “ O! sanctas gentes, quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis  
 “ Numina \*.”

But what do such proofs avail, while the philosophic Mr. Gibbon can discover, (no doubt, *from a combination of facts*), that “ the Roman who deprecated the wrath of the Tiber, could *not* *ride* the Egyptian who presented his offering to the beneficent genius of the Nile †.”

The poet mentions also, as Herodotus had done before him, that the people in different districts were not uniform in their religious notions. Some held for sacred the very objects, which others looked upon with horror. He mentions the quarrels in consequence of this difference in opinion;

\* Sat. 15.

† Decline and Fall, p. 30.

quarrels

quarrels of long standing, which had lasted for ages.

———“ *vetus atque antiqua simultas,  
“ Immortale odium \**”

He adds, that the people of Tentyra having taken one of the adverse party prisoner, cut him to pieces and devoured his limbs yet panting with life : to so great a pitch was their ferocity raised.

What was the respect shewn by *Horace* to the deities of his country ; and to religious worship in general ? Just none at all. He ridiculed the whole : and his sentiments about other deities may be traced in his reverence to Priapus.

“ *Olim truciſ eram ficulnus inutile lignum :*

“ *Cum faber incertus, ſcamaum faceretne Priapum,*

“ *Maluit eſſe Deum : Deus hinc ego, furum  
“ aviumque*

“ *Maxima formido.*”——

“ *Mentiar at ſiquid, merdis caput inquirar al-  
“ bis †.*”

Priapus was by ſome nations held in great eſteem, and by Phornutus (or Cornutus) he is repreſented as the deity of nature, and the *Logos*, or ſoul of the world. But the Romans did not adopt this reverential regard : and Horace looked upon him as a mere ſcarecrow.

As the ſame worſhip was at times held in different eſtimation ; ſo likewiſe were the prieſts and diviners. Thus the Haruſpices had thoſe, who countenanced their pretenſions to divination ; but in general they muſt have been looked upon as ſo

\* Sat. 15. ver. 33.

† Sat. viii. lib. 1.

many

many cheats, if we may judge from that proverbial expression mentioned by Cicero : " Mirabile  
 " videtur, quod non rideat Haruspex, cum Ha-  
 " suspicem viderit \*."

These things most evidently prove that there was *not a religious harmony* among different nations, nor even in the same state. Nor did people with reverence embrace each other's superstitions : but on the contrary often despised them ; and held them in abhorrence. And this difference in opinion was frequently attended with popular animosities and persecutions. And now let me ask my reader what credit is due to the Historian of the Roman Empire, when he asserts ; that, " the religious concord of the world was principally supported by the implicit assent and reverence which the nations of antiquity expressed for their respective traditions and ceremonies †." But the whole of his argument is stale, and borrowed. For, in short, all that he has said about, " *religious harmony in the ancient world,*" and the happy consequences of heathenism, may be comprised in the words of Mr. Collins ; whose sentiments are the same, though expressed in other words. " *The infinite variety of opinions, religions, and worships, among the ancient heathens, never produced any disorder or confusion.*" What, says his learned Respondent ‡, *was it no disorder, when Socrates suffered death for his opinion : when Aristotle was impeached and fled : when Stilpo was banished : and when Diagoras was proscribed ? Were not the Epicureans driven out from several cities, for the debaucheries, and tumults they caused there ? Did not Antiochus banish all philosophers out of his whole*

\* De Natur. Deor. lib. iii. c. 26.

† Decline and Fall, p. 520.

‡ The author of Philoleutherus Lipsiensis, p. 156.

H

" kingdom :



“ kingdom : and for any one to learn of them, made  
 “ it death to the youth himself, and confiscation  
 “ of goods to the parents ? Did not Domitian expel  
 “ all the philosophers out of Rome and Italy ? Did  
 “ the Galli, the vagabond priests of Cybele, make no  
 “ disturbances in town or country ? Did not the Ro-  
 “ mans frequently forbid strange rites, that had crept  
 “ into the city ; and banish the authors of them ?  
 “ Did the Bacchanals create no disorder in Rome,  
 “ when they endangered the whole state : and thou-  
 “ sands were put to death for having been initiated  
 “ in them ? In a word, was that no disturbance in  
 “ Egypt, which Juvenal tells of his own knowledge  
 “ (and which frequently used to happen) when in two  
 “ neighbouring cities their religious feuds ran so high,  
 “ that at the annual festival of one, the other out of  
 “ zeal went to disturb the solemnity ; and after thou-  
 “ sands were fighting on both sides, and many eyes  
 “ and noses lost, the scene ended in slaughter ; and the  
 “ body slain was cut in bits, and eaten up raw by the  
 “ enemies ? and all this barbarity was committed ;  
 “ because the one side worshipped crocodiles ; and the  
 “ other killed and eat them.”

“ Summus utrinque

“ Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum  
 “ Odit uterque locus : cum solos credat habendos  
 “ Esse Deos, quos ipse colit \*.”

“ Let him go now and talk facetiously to his club,  
 “ that among the Pagans there was no polemic Divi-  
 “ nity.” So much for harmony in heathenism ;  
 and its universal respect and reverence.

When our Historian had fully persuaded his  
 unwary readers into an opinion of the easy indiffe-  
 rence and toleration of Polytheism ; when he had

\* Juvenal. Sat. xv.

worked

worked up their admiration for the mild genius of idolatry, by painting it in the most lively colours : it was then the proper time to introduce the worshippers of the one God to the greatest disadvantage ; and to make a contrast, by representing them as being distinguished by an *implacable intolerant* zeal ; arising, if we credit our philosopher, from the singularity of their worship, and the peculiarity of their tenets. Accordingly, we read, in the next sentence, “ *A single people refused to join in the common intercourse of mankind* \*.”

This people, Mr. Gibbon tells us, were the *Jews*. But how did they stand out singly ; and make this refusal ? they did no more than their neighbours the Egyptians and Sidonians ; and many other nations upon earth. Besides, in religious matters there was no general and universal intercourse : and it was impossible for them to accede, where there was no uniformity. Whither should they betake themselves ? To the rites of *Mitbras*, or of *Osiris* ? to those of *Samothracia*, or of *Eleusis* ? To *Cronus*, or to *Baal* ? While the Jews remained in a flourishing state, they were in a manner secluded from the world, and persevered in the religion of their fathers. But the same was done by the Egyptians on one side of them, and by the Phenicians on the other. Why is that mentioned as single and extraordinary in them, which was common to other nations. If Mr. Gibbon would insinuate that they would not associate with other people, the accusation is not true : for they were to be found of old, as they are at this day, in all parts of the world. They adhered indeed to the religion, in which they had been instituted ; and married among those of their own race : and endea-

\* Decline and Fall, p. 451.

voured to keep up the distinction of their tribes. The like was observable among the casts of the Indians, and the Gymnosophists : and in some degree among the Egyptians. But these peculiarities were a part of their religious institution, which they had the same right to follow, as any other people.

I have already shewn that " the rights of toleration were *not* held by mutual indulgence ;" as our Historian would persuade us ; on the contrary, it is proved, that " the payment of this tribute, though inflexibly refused by the Jews, was *not* refused by them *alone* \*." Let him therefore again exert his philosophic discernment " to discover a more probable cause of the persecution of the Christians."

In the mean while, let us consider the representation which our Historian is pleased to give us of the state and condition of the Jews.

In his *Vindication*, he says, " the nature of my subject led me to mention, not the *real origin* of the Jews, but their *first appearance* to the eyes of other nations ; and I cannot avoid transcribing the short passage in which I introduced them. *The Jews, who under the Assyrian and Persian monarchies had languished for many ages the most despised portion of their slaves, emerged from their obscurity under the successors of Alexander,*" &c. †.

Surely this is a strange way of introducing them ! It betrays at once the designs of an enemy, to represent their *first appearance* to the eyes of other nations, as *the most despised portion of slaves*. In the nature of things, they must have been free before they were brought into slavery ; and we might pre-

\* History, p. 520.

† Vind. p. 18.

sume there was some inducement, such as wealth, or dominion, to prevail on other nations to invade their right and property.

One might venture to assert that a monarch who reigned over “ *near seven millions of Subjects,*” according to Mr. G.’s own computation \*, could not be totally unknown. And if we might be allowed to introduce the flourishing state of the Israelites, which the sacred history authorises; the glory of Solomon’s reign; his riches and power; his alliance, by marriage, with the king of *Egypt*; his trade and commerce with the kings of *Arabia*, *Tyre*, and *Syria*; his fame, which reached so far as the court of the Queen of Sheba †; and to repeat “ that he reigned over all the kings from the river “ even unto the land of the Philistines, and “ the border of *Egypt* ‡ :”—should we take this extensive view of the Jewish people, we might be fully authorised to say, that “ their first appearance to the eyes of other nations,” was not in a period wherein they were disgraced by a state of vassalage.

Mr. Gibbon may with some plausibility reply, that this glory relates to a period he did not mean to introduce; that he alluded to “ the age, in “ which the Jewish people, emerging from their “ obscurity, began to act a part in the society of “ nations, and to excite the curiosity of the *Greek* “ and *Roman* Historians §.”—But is the silence of *Herodotus* a fair evidence of their obscurity? And

\* Vind. p. 23, 24.

† The commentators in general place her dominion in Arabia Felix. See Patrick on 1 Kings, ch. x. and 2 Chron. ch. ii. viii. ix.

‡ 2 Chron. ix. 26. Ezra, iv. 20. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 2. sect. 2.

§ Vind. p. 28.

is it the *first* time the Jews are mentioned by *Justin*, when he speaks of the siege of Jerusalem? Critics are of opinion that the former *spoke* of *Jerusalem*, which he visited in his travels through Judea, under the name of *Cadytis* \*. And does not Justin go so far back as to speak of the origin, and departure of the Jews from Egypt †? Or even granting they were not described by these writers; no one surely will deny their acquaintance and connection with the *Egyptians*, a nation great and powerful at that time, before the *Grecian* or *Roman* name had acquired any celebrity.

Though obscurity may envelop and equivocation perplex this period of their history: yet with regard to the state of the Jews under the *Babylonians* and the *Persians*, we have the full light of sacred Scripture to direct us.

I have in my *Examination* taken notice, that if by the *Jews* our author means the *ten* tribes, they never emerged, nor returned home. If he means the real *Jews*, the *two* tribes of Judah and Benjamin, they were never in captivity under the *Assyrians*. Besides, they never languished, but for the most part seemed too well satisfied with their situation: much less did they languish for *ages*; and under the *Persians*. The whole of their captivity was but of seventy years duration: and in the very first year of the Persian monarchy they had a permit to return. I have said, and must still maintain, that one shall scarcely find in so small a compass such a number of inaccuracies ‡.

Mr. Gibbon, in answer to this, has endeavoured to shew, in his *Vindication*, that both the *Jews*

\* See Prideaux's remarks on this matter; *Connections* vol. i. p. 44. 291. Herodotus, lib. ii. c. 159. l. iii. c. 5.

† Justin. l. xxxvi.

‡ Exam. p. 2, 3, &c.

and

and the people of *Israel* were often spoken of in this indiscriminate manner : and that the *Babylonians* and *Affyrians* were one and the same people\*.

He does indeed allow, that “ the name of *Jews* “ in the times which precede the captivity, is “ used in the more general sense with some sort of “ *impropriety* †.” But he attempts to justify himself by speaking of it “ as the practice of the best “ writers. Josephus, Reland, and Prideaux, are “ cited as examples ‡.” Let us see how far their authorities avail him.

His argument, drawn from the title of their respective works, is so fallacious, that it must strike every one. Shall we call the *ancient Gauls*, *Frenchmen*, because a person writing the history of the French should introduce them into his work ? Or are we to stile our *British* ancestors *Englishmen*, be-

\* Vind. p. 19, 20.

† Now, though we should accede to Mr. G.’s interpretation, yet, to preserve an agreement with history, he is reduced to the sad dilemma of being forced to give different interpretations to the same words.

First, the word *Jews* means the *ten tribes of Israel* conquered and enslaved by the *Affyrians*; and “ languishing for many ages” under their successors. Secondly, It means the *two tribes of Judah and Benjamin*, when they were under the *Persian* monarchy, and “ emerged from obscurity under the successors of Alexander.”

Again, the word *Affyrian* is confined to its own proper import, when that nation overcame the people and kings of *Israel*: but its signification is extended to imply the *Babylonians*, when he chooses to say, the *Jews* were “ the most despised portion of the *Affyrian* slaves.” Thus does he continually shift his ground to evade the accusation.

“ Verum ubi correptum manibus vinculisque tenebris

“ Tum variæ illudent species atque ora——

“ Sed quanto ille magis formas se vertet in omnes,

“ Tanto, gnate, magis contende tenacia vincla.” VIRGIL.

‡ Vind. p. 20.

H 4

cause

cause the country has since been called *England*? But I shall proceed to shew that each of these writers “ assign the strict and proper limits to those “ national denominations.”

In the words of the learned *Prideaux*, I can give at the same time the opinion, (or rather the definition) given by *Josephus*, on whose authority it is quoted, as to this question. “ On the return of “ *Judab* and *Benjamin* from the *Babylonish* captivity, some also of each of the other tribes of “ *Israel* returned with them out of *Affyria*, *Babylon*, and *Media*, whither they had been before “ carried.—But the most of them that returned “ being of the tribe of *Judab*, that swallowed up “ the names of all the rest; for from this time the “ whole people of *Israel*, of what tribe soever they “ were, began to be called *Jews*, and by that name “ they have all of them been ever since known all “ the world over \*.”

In the definition which *Reland* gives of the word *Judæa* (not *Jews*), he remarks, that “ it “ properly means the land of *Judab* and *Benjamin*; “ while it often implies the whole land of *Israel*, “ varying its signification with the times to which “ it relates †.”

*Josephus*

\* *Prideaux's Connection*, vol. i. part ii. book 3d, p. 150. See this distinction observed, vol. i. p. 24. 48. 54. 61, &c.

Εκλήθησαν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα (ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ) ἐξ ἧς ἡμέρας αἰχίσθησαν ἐκ Βαβυλωνος, ἀπο τῆς Ἰουδα φυλῆς, ἧς πρῶτης αἰχίσθησις ἐκείνης τῆς τοπικῆς, αὐτοὶ ἴσιν καὶ ἡ χώρα τῆς προσηγορίας αὐτῆς μεταβάλλεται.—*Joseph. Antiq. Jud.* l. xi. c. 5. sect. 7. ed. Havercamp.

† “ *Nomen terræ Judæ, sive יְרֵמְיָהּ שְׂרָא proprie illam tantum regionem significat, quæ a tribu Juda possessa fuit, et scisso in duas partes regno, quarum illa Judæ hæc Israël dicta postmodum fuit, terras duarum præcipue tribuum Judæ et Benjaminis: At videtur in ipso veteri instrumento nonnunquam nomen Judæ, sive terra Judæ, latius accipi pro universa terra Israelitica, &c. Reland. l. i. c. 6. De nomine Judæ,*

p. 32,

Josephus is very accurate and particular in his use of the terms *Jews* and *Israelites*, and constantly preserves the distinction through his history. The *ten* tribes are called *Israelites* \*. The *two* tribes of Judah and Benjamin, are stiled the *Jews* †.

We have now seen that the very writers to whom Mr. Gibbon appeals, point out and preserve the distinction of terms, which he confusedly adopts.

With regard to the indiscriminate use of the words *Babylonian* and *Assyrian*, Mr. Gibbon has, with great confidence, rested the point upon a passage in the Prophet Isaiah ‡, who, says he, “in the name of Jehovah, announcing the downfall of *Babylon*, and the deliverance of *Israel*, declares “with an oath; *And as I have purposed, the thing shall stand: to crush the ASSYRIAN in my land, and to trample him on my mountains. Then shall his yoke depart from off them; and his burthen shall be removed from off their shoulders.*”

I know not how to venture my opinion in opposition to the judgment of so learned and experienced a person, as the justly-celebrated author of the late version of *Isaiah*: yet, as I shall not presume to determine any thing, I will take the

p. 32. — Vis ei nomini subjecta (i. e. Judææ,)—pro ratione diversorum temporum, modo *latius*, modo *minus* late patet.

p. 31. See also p. 34.

\* He thus relates the captivity of the ten tribes of *Israel* by the Assyrians. Σαλμανασαρης δ' ὁ τῶν Ασσυρίων βασιλεὺς—τὴν Ἰσραηλιτῶν ἡγεμονίαν ἀρδὴν ἤφανισεν, καὶ πάντα τοὺς λαοὺς μετήρχισεν εἰς τὴν Μεδίαν καὶ Περσίδα. Antiq. Jud. l. ix. c. 14. See also l. viii. c. 8.

† When he speaks of the Babylonish captivity, he says, “Nebuzaradan carried away captive the nation of the *Jews*.” Λιχμαλωτίσας τοὺς τῶν ἸΟΥΔΑΙΩΝ λαόν. L. x. c. 9. See likewise l. viii. c. 12, l. xi. c. 1, and c. 5. sect. 17.

‡ Isaiah, c. xiv. ver. 24, 25,

liberty



liberty to submit my notions to the reader. The Assyrians and Babylonians are in this chapter supposed by Mr. Gibbon to be *one* and the *same* people. But to my humble apprehension they appear to be quite otherwise.

It is to be observed, that as the chapters in the Bible are now divided, many articles are brought together, as relating to the same history, and as being of the same tendency, which are found upon inquiry to be quite independent; and to have no relation. Thus in the fourteenth chapter of *Isaiab* there is a denunciation of God's vengeance against *Babylon* described at large; and the final destruction of that city foretold, with all the particular circumstances of its ruin, which we know to have been wonderfully fulfilled: and the people of that great empire are supposed to be mentioned both under the title of *Babylonians* and *Assyrians*. Hence it is presumed, that the Babylonians and the Assyrians were the *same* people. But to me, both in this passage, and in all others, they appear to have been described as essentially different: for however they may be in this instance commemorated *together*, yet there seem to be two distinct prophecies the one *subsequent* to the other, and the prophet speaks of two different people. This will appear plainly to any person, who, after this intimation, will attentively consider the different parts of this chapter\*. The first contains a prophecy against the Babylonians; which is very pointed and determinate; and concludes with the utter ruin of their city; which was to be rendered a pool of water; and to be

\* In this xvth chapter are three prophecies; the first against the Babylonians; the second against the Assyrians; and the third, an obscure one, against the people of Palæstina, or Philistim.

uninhabited

uninhabited for ever. “ *For I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water : and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts \**.” Here we find an utter end of the city as well as of the people. The prophecy must necessarily finish here ; as there is nothing more to be said. That which follows, though supposed to be connected, has in reality no relation to the prophecy which preceded. It begins with this exordium.—*The Lord of hosts hath sworn : surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass : and as I have purposed, so shall it stand : that I will break the ASSYRIAN in my land ; and upon my mountains tread him under foot. Then shall his yoke depart from off them ; and his burden depart from off their shoulders †*. Now let me ask, When was it that the *Babylonian* was thus demolished in the sacred land ; and trod under foot in the mountains of Judah ? Nothing of this sort ever happened. But the *Assyrian* was thus trampled down and broken ; and the prophecy relates to *Sennacherib*, and the downfall of the Assyrian empire : and particularly to the destruction of that prince’s army, when it was encamped before Libnah, in the hilly region of Judah. Here it was that one hundred fourscore and five thousand men of his numerous host were cut off in one night : and Hezekiah and his people freed from the *Assyrian* yoke : for most of the fenced cities before had been in subjection to the enemy ‡. Sennacherib upon this misfortune returned to Nineve, where he was soon after slain ; and the empire of Assyria ended in his successor Esar-Haddon, or Assar-

\* C. xiv. ver. 23.

† Ver. 24, 25.

‡ 2 Kings c. xviii. 13. xix. 35.

Adon. The time of this prophecy is precisely determined by the words at the conclusion—" *In the year that King Abaz died, was this burden* \*." This was about fifteen years before the ruin of the Assyrian army ; for in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, Sennacherib came up against Judah ; and Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz. From these histories it is manifest that *the Assyrians and Babylonians were not the same people*. Let me now ask Mr. Gibbon, if I have any need to apply the terms of *ignorance and inaccuracy* to the prophet Isaiah ?

It is moreover observable, that the Assyrians used to carry away the people whom they conquered, and to place colonies of different people in the vacated cities of each nation. After Samaria had been taken, the ten tribes were carried to Hala, Habor, and Haran ; and to the cities of the Medes. In their room were brought by the King of Assyria men from Ava, Cutha, Hamath, Sepharvaim ; also from Media and Elam. Among these we find mentioned men from *Babylonia* †. Now, when it is said, that the Assyrians brought *Babylonians*, are we to suppose that they brought *Assyrians* ? Certainly not ; yet Mr. Gibbon would persuade us, that they were the same people : And when it is said that the *Assyrians* conquered the *Babylonians*, can it be thought that the Assyrians defeated themselves ? All these instances of inconsistency he tries to evade, by endeavouring to qualify and moderate what he has said ; and by appealing to Grecian authority. But the whole is an obstinate mistake on his side ; and of such sort as shews, that he only skims the surface of History. As to Herodotus, Strabo, and the other

\* Isaiah c. xiv. 28.

† 2 Kings c. xvii. 6. 24. xix. 11, 12.

Greek writers, they speak of nations and kingdoms as they were estimated in *their* time. We do the same ourselves; and include a vast country at this day under the name of Persia, quite up to Astrabad and Derbent, upon the Caspian sea. But were a person in speaking of ancient times to mention Ragau, or Egbatana, as Persian or even Assyrian cities, he would be very culpable. Judea has been at times stiled Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Idumea \*; yet they were all distinct countries, and the people of those countries essentially different. But after all, Strabo, on whom Mr. Gibbonds so much, has nothing to his purpose; and he must have misunderstood him entirely. Strabo never says, that the Assyrians and Babylonians were the *same* people; he affords not the least colour for this notion. Nay, he intimates the very contrary. His account of Assyria begins with an enumeration of the various countries comprehended under that name †: καλεσι δ' οὕτω τῇ Βαβυλωνίῳ, καὶ πολλῇ τῆς κυκλῶ γῆς. *They speak of Babylonia under this name; and a large portion of country round about.* He proceeds to inform us afterwards, that Elymais, Dolomene, Chalachine, Apolloniatis, together with many of the Mesopotamian regions, were in like manner comprehended; and particularly those parts upon the Euphrates, which were occupied by the Arabians. Such is the account of this geographer. Are we from hence to suppose, that he would make the people of Elam, Arabia, &c. the same as the Assyrians? He has no such intention. He is only describing an extent of empire, which

\* Vid. Selden. Syntagmata de Dis Syris in Prolegom. & Beyer. Additamenta, p. 6. Reland. de reb. Palæstin. in nomen Judææ.

† L. xvi. p. 1070.

went under one name. What his real opinion was of the genuine Assyrians, may be known from his determination of their country, when he comes to define it properly; and to describe its capital, Nineve. He says, that this city of Ninus was *in the region of Aturia*; which Aturia many with good reason have imagined to have been a mere variation of the term Assyria\*. But where was this Aturia? He tells us; *Aturia borders upon the region about Arbela*†. And where was Arbela? He proceeds to tell us, that it belonged to Babylonia; consequently it was not a part of Assyria. But this is impossible, if Babylonia and Assyria were the same. The truth is, they were not the same; and it is plain from this city being thus adjudged to the one, and not to the other. They lay on different sides of the river; and the people were alike distinct and separated in the same manner. Our Historian would evade this matter; but I will keep him strictly to the point; and not afford him opportunity for any subterfuge. What will the reader say now to Mr. Gibbon's polite compliment, "If Mr. Davis were a man of learning, I might be morose enough to censure his ignorance of ancient geography, and to overwhelm him under a load of quotations,

\* *Ατურια* and *Ατურια* were used for *Ασσυρία*, just as *τιτταρις* was for *τισσαρις*. Strabo indeed mentions the same region by both names; though he rather gives the name of *Ασσυρία* to the whole empire in its widest extent; and appropriates *Ατურια* to the ancient and original province of Assur. That *Aturia* was the same as the ancient Assyria, is plain to a demonstration. For the ancient and true Assyria was the province of which Nineve (called Assur at this day) was the capital. But so was *Aturia*. *Ατურια εστιν εν ηπερ η Νινος—Νινος πολις—εν πιδω κυμνη της Ατურιας.*—Strabo, l. xvi. p. 1070, 1.—Therefore *Aturia* and *Assuria*, however expressed, are the same.

† *Η δε Ατურια τοις περι Αρβηλα τοποις εστιν ὁμοια* (read ὁμοια).

“ which

“ which might be collected and transcribed with  
 “ very little trouble ?”

But as my adversary has most obligingly appealed to Herodotus, in accommodation to my capacity, “ as he *must* suppose that I have received  
 “ a classical education :” it would be very unkind not to attend to his proof, that Babylon was the capital of Assyria \*.

True it was ; but at what time does the historian say, it became the capital of Assyria ? not till after the destruction of Nineve. Now this event happened ante C. 612 †, but the Israelites were made captives by the Assyrians several years before that period. Mr. Gibbon therefore has not gained a step by this authority, unless it would prove Babylon to be the metropolis, when the ten tribes were carried into captivity.

Besides, he should have fairly told us, that Herodotus calls the inhabitants of this *Assyrian* metropolis *Chaldeans* (οἱ χαλδαῖοι ‡), and that in other places he makes a distinction in the clearest terms between the Assyrians and Babylonians. After speaking of the revolt of the Medes, under Deioces, from the Assyrians, he says, “ And in this  
 “ manner the Medes preserved their empire, and  
 “ recovered their former dominions ; took Nine-  
 “ ve ; and made the *Assyrians* subject to them ;  
 “ except the province of *Babylon* §.”

This event took place in the reign of Cyaxares, Phraortes being slain at the siege of Nineve ; at which period, a distinct person, Nabopolassar, who

\* Vind. p. 21.

† See Prideaux and Usher.

‡ Clio, c. 182, 183.

§ Καὶ ὅτω ἀνίσωσαντο τὴν ἀρχὴν Μῆδοι, καὶ ἐπικράτειον τῆς περὶ καὶ προτέρου. καὶ τήντε Νινὴν ἴλον—καὶ τῆς ΑΣΣΥΡΙΟΥΣ ὑποχείριως ἐποίησαντο, πλὴν τῆς ΒΑΒΥΛΩΝΙΑΣ μοίρας. C. x. 6.  
 had

had also rebelled against the King of *Assyria*, was King of *Babylon*; and therefore his province was not touched by the Medes. So that Herodotus does not justify this indiscriminate use of the words *Assyrian* and *Babylonian*.

Had I not produced the evidences already collected, I might have put the issue of the contest on a single text; as there is one the most plain, and the most convincing, that can be desired. It is in a prophecy of Jeremiah, where the king of *Babylon* is expressly opposed to the king of *Assyria*; and the land of one to the land of the other. In consequence of which, both the country and the people are manifestly distinguished. The prophet is speaking of the enemies of Israel, and of God's judgments upon them. "*Israel is a scattered sheep: the lions have driven him away: first the king of ASSYRIA hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of BABYLON hath broken his bones. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold I will punish the king of Babylon, and his land; as I have punished the king of Assyria\*.*" What do the notions of the Greeks and Romans, taken collectively, amount to, when opposed to this positive and precise evidence? In short, an Assyrian king is never mentioned as a Babylonian. The last of that empire was Assar-Adon; and though he had possession of Babylon, yet he is never stiled king of it; on the contrary, a proper distinction is always maintained. For when it is said that his officers took Manasseh, and carried him bound to Babylon, they are stiled the officers of the king of *Assyria*; though it is certain, that the city abovementioned was then in

\* Jeremiah, c. l. v. 17, 18.

his

his hands \*. Now Assar-Adon † was the king who was discomfited by Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish; and this is the last time that we hear any thing of a king of Assyria ‡. For Nineve was soon after ruined by the Medes, and Nebuchadnezzar set up for himself at Babylon; as Berodach Baladan || had done before him, but with better success §. From this time forward we read only of kings of Babylon. To finish the whole of this argument, I beg to lay down this as a test, that in the Scriptures you will never hear of Assyrians from Babylon, nor of Babylonians from Nineve ††.

It

\* 2 Chron. c. xxxiii. v. 11.

† Sir Isaac Newton, and after him the writers of the Universal History, make Sarac, or Assaradon the second, to be the king who lost Carchemish to Neco, and in whom the Assyrian name ended. Before him, and after the great Assaradon, they place Saosduchius and Chyniladon, from Ptolemy's canon.—The latter of these they suppose to be the Nabuchodonosor of the book of Judith. But, at any rate, it appears that the king, who lost Carchemish, was the last of the Assyrian name.

‡ Sir John Marsham corroborates this assertion in his Chronicon :

Postquam Babylonii per annos octo sine rege vixissent, deficiente forsan stirpe regia. Rex hic, (Asar-haddon) ea opportunitate fretus, Babylonem occupat, & utrumque *Assyriorum* regnum (quod a Nabonassari tempore duplex fuerat) in unum redigit. Post hanc regnorum conjunctionem, evanuit *Assyriaci*, increbuit *Babylonici* nominis gloria adeo ut Rex hic *Assyriorum* ultimus sit in S. literis celebratus; ejusque successores *Babylonii* nuncupentur. Ipse autem tam *Assyriae*, quam *Babyloniae* Rex agnoscitur. Chron. p. 514. 4<sup>o</sup> ed. Franeg. 1696. See Prideaux's Connections, vol. i. p. 151. Usher's Annals, ante C. 610.

|| Some express this name otherwise. It probably was *Merodach Baladan*.

§ 2 Kings, c. xxiii. v. 19. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. x. c. 2. § 2.

†† The learned Beyer, in his additions to Selden's Synagmata, mentions an ingenious conjecture, which he recommends



It follows therefore that the *Jews* were never under the *Affyrian* yoke, much less did they languish for many ages. But we are, in the next place to consider what reason our Historian has for calling them *the most despised portion of their slaves* \*.

These are hard terms, and he strains every nerve, to blacken the character of the Jews, and to make them both hateful and contemptible :

commends from Martin and Scaliger, as “ an useful and excellent method of distinguishing the *Chaldean* or *Babylonian* from the *Affyrian* kings, by reducing their names to the simple words.”——

“ Huc referre non ineptum erit, quod *Martinus* in Lexico “ habet de his et aliis Deorum regumque nominibus, et simplicibus et compositis, occasione *Nebuchadnezzaris* regis “ *Babylonis* fere ex *Scaligero*, quem citat, ita vero ille.”—*Nebuchadnezzar* rex *Babylonis*, qui *Beroso*, *Ναβυχοδονοσορος*.

Vox est composita ex *בב* quod et *בב* et *בב* et *בב* quod et *בב* et *בב* quæ sunt inter nomina simplicia propria ; quorum catalogum habes apud *Scaligerum* Lib. 6. de. *Emendat. Temp.* ubi monet horum et similibus nominum methodum utilissimam esse, et maximè necessariam Chronologo, saltem ut ne Reges *Affyrios* cum *Chaldeis* confundat.

I shall take some instances from each.

#### Nomina propria *Chaldæorum*.

1. Nebo, Lebo. 2. Nego. 3. Neror. 4. Scheschach.
5. Meschach. 7. Letzar. 8. Netzar. 11. Belti. 12. Adam.
16. Bel. 20. Dach. 24. Chad.

#### *Affyriorum*.

1. Schadran. 2. Schalman. 3. Teg lith. 5. Haddan.
6. Neschroch. 8. Etzar vel Atzar. 9. Asar. 10. Ballat.
11. Ofen vel Ofn. 13. Sen. 14. Pul.

Now, as he observes, these were chiefly names of *Chaldæan* Gods or idols, and were adopted by their Princes and great men ; we can easily distinguish the Kings of *Affyria* and their servants, from the Kings of *Babylon*. *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Nabopolassar*, and *Nebuzaradan*, are particular instances of *Chaldæan* names, specified by this learned critic. See *Beyer Additamenta ad Seldeni Syntagmata*, p. 332, 333.

\* History, p. 451.

as if this would at all affect the worship which they maintained, or the religion which was subsequent to it. It is a stale trick, and unworthy a person of our Author's parts and learning, to have deviated into a path, which has been so often beaten: especially by Tindall and Bolingbroke: by Voltaire and Du Pauw.

To confute in the most evident manner this malignant assertion, I shall give

AN EPITOME OF THE JEWISH HISTORY,  
*During their Captivity under the Assyrians,  
 Medes, and Persians.*

As Mr. Gibbon says, " If he had designed to investigate the Jewish antiquities, reason, as well as faith, must have directed his enquiries to the sacred books \* : " he cannot object to my having so closely followed the holy Scriptures. The Jews by their obstinacy and rebellion had brought upon themselves the fierce anger of the king of Babylon: and upon their city being taken, a great number of them suffered without mercy. Yet as soon as the first impulse of anger was over, no captives were better esteemed, or more honoured. So that what ensued was quite contrary to every article, which the malignity of our Historian would insinuate. The very first order concerning them proves, how superior their nation must have been to others, from the deference, which was shewn to them in the same circumstances. *And the king (Nebuchadnezzar) spake unto Ashpenar, the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the prince's children, in whom there was no blemish; but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom,*

\* Vind. p. 29.

*and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science; and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace\*, &c.*" We here see the persons, whom our author would depreciate, selected by their bitter enemy for their worth, excellence, and skill in science; and destined immediately to the highest honours of his court. And for what reason were they thus distinguished above others? I have just said, that it was on account of their personal accomplishments, as well as for the endowments of their minds. And of this the king could not have had any experience: the whole must necessarily have arisen from the general character of the people for learning and wisdom. Daniel, who was very young at this time, was particularly favoured: and at last came to be made governor of the province of Babylon, and was also by the prince raised to be head of the Magi†. Many others among the Jews were held in great honour: nor is there the least reason to think, but that the whole of the nation was in repute and favour. Azariah, one of Daniel's friends, was promoted to a place of eminence under him in the province of Babylonia. Such posts in the very heart of the kingdom shew, what great trust was reposed in them. Who would think that such exalted characters could have been so shamefully traduced? Evil-merodach, the king of Babylon, conferred great honour upon "Jehoiachin, king of Judah," lifted him up out of prison, spake kindly to him, "and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon‡" In the reign

\* Daniel, c. i. v. 3. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. x. c. 10. ed. Havercamp.

† Ibid. c. ii. v. 48.

‡ 2 Kings, c. xxv. 27—30. Joseph. Antiq. l. x. c. 11. sect. 2.

of

of Belshazzar \*, Daniel does not seem to have been in the same repute. Of this one reason probably was, his prophecy concerning the fate of the empire; which he more than once foretold would be ruined, and transferred to other people. However such was his reputation, that the king sends for him at an exigency: and though there were some fatal truths disclosed by him, yet he is revered greatly; and the King shews him every mark of honour. Not one syllable have we yet of hardships, contempt, and ignominy: nor is there the least tendency to annihilation. We come now to Darius the Mede, who had made himself king of Babylon. This prince appointed an hundred and twenty satraps to preside over the different provinces of his empire; which shews its vast extent. Over these were three presidents of a superior order; of whom Daniel was the first †. The Jews of the captivity could not be in a very wretched state, while they had some of their brethren in so high departments. The history concludes with an account of the permanency of these honours: “*So* this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and of Cyrus the Persian ‡.” Besides these, *Nehemiah* was cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, “a place of great honour and advantage,” says Prideaux §: And *Ezra*, was held in great esteem ||.—But I need not urge the example of *for-*

\* Authors are divided as to Belshazzar being the son of Nebuchadnezzar. The generality make him the grandson, in compliance with the Prophets, Is. xiv. 22. Jer. xxvii. 7. Sir Isaac Newton supposes him to be the son, on the authority of Daniel, v. 2. where he is expressly so called, and also in Baruch i. 11, 12.

† Daniel, c. vi. 1, 2. Joseph. Antiq. l. x. c. 11. sect. 4, 5.

‡ Ibid. c. vi. 28.

§ Connections, vol. i. p. 288. Nehemiah, c. ii. 1.

|| Ezra, c. viii. ver. 21. 24, 25.

*fortunate individuals*, as they are called : the favours conferred on the nation in general will fully establish my point.

Let us now turn our eyes to the history of *Esther* : which gives us, we are told, “ a very extraordinary instance of the degree of estimation “ in which the Jews were held at Susa \*.” *Esther* seems to have been a woman of extraordinary endowments ; and was on that account raised to be queen by Ahasuerus. In her time a horrid conspiracy was formed against the Jews : in which their enemies had purposed at one stroke, to have cut off all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus. Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, consequently a determined enemy to all of the Israelitish name, had been raised to great honours by the king. By the liberty granted him of having continual access to his presence, he sought an opportunity of carrying into execution his cruel design of extirpating the whole Jewish nation, for the offence of one individual. “ He thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone ; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai †.” *And Haman said unto the king, there is a people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom : and their laws are divers from all people : neither keep they the king's laws. Therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king ; let it be written, that they be destroyed : and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those, who have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasury ‡.*” The king assented : and orders were dispatched into every province :

\* Vind. p. 24.

† *Esther*, c. iii. 6.

‡ *Ibid.* ver. 8, 9.

and

and without doubt secretly, that upon a certain day the Jews should be set upon ; and all of them put to death \*.

Mr. Gibbon exults on this occasion, and says with a sneer, “ this trifling favour was asked by “ the minister, and granted by the monarch, with “ an easy indifference, which expressed their con- “ tempt for the lives and fortunes of the Jews †.” But the Historian should have considered how many parts of this fact make against his intention of proving the despicable state of the Jews. Prideaux tells us this *Abasuerus* was the same as *Artaxerxes*, “ who shewed extraordinary favour and kindness “ to the Jews, beyond all the other kings that “ reigned in *Persia* ‡.” But he was prevailed on by the artifices of his favourite minister, to give up in a most barbarous and cruel manner a whole innocent nation as a sacrifice to the resentment of Haman.

*Le Clerc*, *Grotius*, and other commentators, shew that this is not the only instance of inhumanity upon record, wherein the punishment incurred by one person was extended to his relations or people §. Modern times exhibit a dreadful parallel, in the inhuman massacre of the Protestants at Paris, permitted and encouraged by Charles the Ninth, at the instigation of the queen-mother Catherine de Me-

\* The weakness and inhumanity of the king is strongly pointed out by *Le Clerc*: he imputes it to a more probable cause than *a contempt for the Jews*, namely, the despotic sway of a Persian monarch, and the abject condition of his people in general (not of the Jews *alone*), who were looked upon as slaves, and their lives esteemed of little value.—“ *Feræ hæc erant, non hominis, &c.*” *Comment. in Est. c. iii. 11. and c. viii. 1.*

† *Vind. p. 25.*

‡ *Connections, Vol. i. p. 200. 244.*

§ *Clerici. Comment. in Est. c. iii. ver. 6. 11. Grotius in lib. Est. c. iii. 13.*

dicis, and by her influence with his ministry. Here we see a whole sect devoted for the offence of one man, and thirty thousand Protestants sacrificed to satiate her resentment. And the irresolute monarch is forced to suffer the barbarous plot to be executed \*.

Surely Mr. G. cannot speak of these unhappy victims as being previously in a despicable state? or call it "*A trifling favour, expressing contempt for their lives and fortunes*," because it was granted "by the Monarch when asked by the Queen and ministers."—But to return—

We may infer from the sequel, that the persons

\* Thuanus, or Le Thou, thus speaks of the fact: and as his impartiality is commended by Mr. Gibbon (Vind. p. 123.) his relation will be the more satisfactory.

"Ibi tunc ultimo consultatur de rei exequendæ ratione: —et quando unius hominis morte, quem ex vulnere convaliturum jam medici affirmabant, regni malum quod ab illo alatur, & in multos diffundatur, extingui non potuit, placuit ut universum exitio opprimeretur, & ira quam Colini folius sanguine expleri noluit Deus in sectarios omnes effunderetur:—Itaque de Protestantibus ad internecionem plane delendis assensere omnes, &c.

Regina media jam nocte, verita, ne Rex, quem ad facinoris atrocitatem adhuc fluctuantem & nutantem sibi animadvertere videbatur, mutaret, in ejus cubiculum descendit —Ibi hæsitantem Regem—a matre increpitum memorant, qui tam pulchram a Deo oblatam debellandorum plane hostium occasionem cunctatione elabi sibi sineret. Thuani Hist. tom. iii. lib. lii. c. 6. ed. Buckley, 1733.

Voltaire, in his *Henriade*, thus speaks of the ascendancy of the imperious Catherine over Charles:

"Charles plus jeune encore avoit le nom du Roi.

"MEDICIS regnoit seule, on trembloit sur sa loi. &c.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Elle arma le courroux de deux sectes rivales.

And again,

"Le peuple dont la reine avoit armé le bras,

"Ouvrit enfin ses yeux & vit ses attentats."

*Henriade*. chant. ii. p. 34. chant. iii. 8vo ed. à Lond. 1728.

to whom the business was chiefly delegated, were their old enemies, those of the nations bordering upon the land of Israel ; who were now in the same state of captivity ; and scattered over the king's dominions. The sacred writers often introduce great events single and unsupported ; leaving out many of the leading and explanatory circumstances ; as being well known in the times when they wrote. This renders some of the histories difficult to be understood. But the Scriptures are of a texture so curious, that what does not at first appear, may generally be discovered by collation. And it is wonderful how much hidden knowledge may be obtained by considering the context, and observing the tendency of the whole. This design against the Jews, was undoubtedly carried on privately, as appears by the queen having never been apprised of it. But secret as it may have been kept \*, it was

\* It is not of any consequence, in respect to the present purpose, whether these designs against the Jews were openly published to all the world, or *carried on in secret*. But as the clearing up of this article will afford light to many other parts of the history, it may be attended with some good effects, should this matter be rightly stated. For there is a seeming obscurity and embarrassment in the narration, of which Mons. de Voltaire has availed himself, in order to depreciate the whole, and, if possible to render it absurd and incredible. As far as I can judge, the designs against the Jews were never known to this people, till Mordecai by some means *perceived* them, and apprised his brethren of their danger. It is very plain, that the queen knew nothing of the matter ; and it is hardly probable, when such a cruel scheme was formed, that it should be published at large to all the world ; and that the very people should be beforehand certified of it, whose lives and fortunes were sought after : and this too almost a year before the execution. Yet the words of the historian seem very determinate, and may be thought too cogent to admit of any limitation : for it is said, that the letters of the king upon this occasion were sent in the first month *into every province, to the lieutenants, governors,*



was providentially discovered to Mordecai, her father's brother, by whom, after the death of her parents,

*governors, and rulers of every people, according to their language; &c.—The copy of the writing was published to all people, that they should be ready against the day. (C. iii. v. 12. 14.) But by all people, here mentioned, we must necessarily understand, all those whom it might at that time concern: those only who were the avowed enemies of the Jews: for the people alluded to, who had the edict particularly directed to them, were those who were to be ready against the day. They were the persons in every province, to whom the executive part of the business had been delegated by Haman; and who were to be the instruments of his malice. As to the first part of the king's letters, wherein the lieutenants, governors, and rulers are mentioned; and the king's orders are specified so minutely, the whole seems to be a mere matter of form; and was probably the usual tenour of all such royal declarations. We find afterwards, when other letters of a different purport were written in favour of the Jews, the preamble was nearly the same. It was written to the Jews: and to the lieutenants, and deputies, and rulers of the provinces, which are from India to Ethiopia—unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people according to their language, &c. (C. viii. v. 9.) This was the tenour of the ordinance: and yet the business was secret. And mention is made at the conclusion, that the copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published to all people. (C. viii. v. 13.) By this, surely, is meant, to all people whom it might concern; and for whom the letters were designed; and not to all in general: for the enemies of the Jews knew nothing of these orders; and it is plainly intimated, that on the very day when the insurrection happened, the enemies of the Jews hoped to have surprised them; but they were disappointed, and were themselves set upon, and destroyed. If then the orders were secret in the latter instance, we may be assured, that they were so in the former. It is indeed said, when the king and Haman seemed satisfied, and sat down to regale themselves, after the decree was issued, that the city Shushan was perplexed. (C. iii. v. 15.) But this concern could not be general; all that we can suppose to be intimated by these words is, that there was perplexity in the city Shushan. There was an apparent uneasiness among those who were privy to the decree; and who disapproved of the king's injustice. I have mentioned that the queen*

rents, she had been brought up. He found means to give her intimations concerning this design : and she

queen was not apprised of this design ; nor was it known to her servants ; nor even to the chief officer, who waited upon her : and Mordecai, who had discovered the horrid scheme, throughout the whole of his correspondence addresses the queen as a person to whom it was entirely a secret. In his message to her he describes the conspiracy at large, and sends her a copy of the decree ; and at the same time lets her know her own danger, as well as that of her friends. In consequence of this the queen was greatly alarmed, and took in hand the deliverance of the Jewish nation. It is indeed previously said, that *in every province, wheresoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, &c.—and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.* (C. iv. v. 3.) Hence we might be induced to imagine, that the Jews, from the very first, were acquainted with the king's purpose. But it was not so ; and we are plainly told, that this alarm, and mourning, were subsequent to the discovery. *When Mordecai perceived all that was done ;* (C. iv. v. 1.) that is, after that he had providentially discovered all, that was purposed against his nation ; and had gotten a copy of the very decree : then (v. 3.) *in every province whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came,* (or rather had come) *there was great mourning among the Jews : then many lay in sackcloth and ashes.* For we may well imagine, that as soon as the discovery was made, intelligence was forthwith sent ; and the Jews were informed of their danger. But when did this happen that *Mordecai perceived all that was done* ? The investigation of this point is of consequence ; as the whole will be confirmed by it ; and I think the time may be with a tolerable degree of accuracy determined. As soon as he had discovered the plot of Haman, and had obtained a copy of the decree, he put on mourning, and stood before the gate of the palace. (C. iv. v. 1.) When the queen was informed of this, she sent an officer to him to ask the reason of his appearing in this manner ; and the cause was forthwith made known unto her. She upon this enjoins Mordecai and his friends to fast and to pray for three days ; and promises that she will herself, with her whole household, do the same. This being performed, upon the *third day* (exclusive) *she put on her royal apparel,* and stood before the king. (C. v. v. 1.) And having obtained a gracious reception, she begs his company on the morrow to a banquet, which she had provided,

she was necessarily alarmed to a great degree. By her address she in good time gained access to the king: and, as her purpose could not be effected in a short space, she invited him for two days successively to a banquet, which she had at her own cost provided. In this interval she informed him, that Haman was a traitor: and that the Jews did not deserve the severity, which the king had been induced to denounce against them. She then informed him of a circumstance, which she had ne-

provided, and which was to last two days. (C. v. ver. 2. 8.) The whole of the time seems to be *six* days inclusive. On the last of these days Haman's treachery was discovered; and he was degraded and put to death. *On that day did king Abasuerus give the house of Haman, the Jews enemy, to Esther.* (C. viii. v. 1.) And the queen took that opportunity to beg of him to reverse his decree against the Jews. *Then were the king's scribes called at that time, in the third month (that is the month Sivan) on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded, unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies, and the rulers of the provinces, &c.* (C. viii. v. 9.) We find, that the interval from Mordecai's being apprised of the design of Haman to the 23d of Sivan, amounts only to *seven* days; so that he obtained his first intelligence upon the 16th, or, at the soonest, upon the 15th of that month. But the first decree against the Jews was passed upon the 13th of the first month; from which, to the 15th of Sivan, were two months and two days. During this term the design was manifestly kept secret; and it would have been thus preserved to the very time of execution, had it not been by some means *providentially* discovered. I have mentioned before, that there can be no doubt about the fact. For a festival is still kept up: and there has been an uniform commemoration annually preserved from the very day of this great deliverance. Yet some persons, from a seeming embarrassment in respect to order and time, have been led to arraign the account given, as inconsistent and improbable. But upon inquiry it is found a regular and consistent history, and, in all respects, agreeable to truth. And the whole of it does honour to the Jewish nation, which, even in captivity, was respectable; and triumphed over all its enemies.

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them, to be beforehand with their enemies, by falling upon them first ; and thus to prevent their designs. It may be asked, Why did not the King countermand what he had ordered, and make void his decree ? It certainly was not in his power : and from hence proceeded his embarrassment. For the laws of the Medes and Persians could not be altered \*. And it is said in the chapter, where this history is recorded,—*The writing which was written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, might no man reverse* †. The only way therefore, which could possibly be devised for the preservation of the Jews, was to let them have secret notice of all that was designed against them : and to give them leave to make use of the intelligence, and to be beforehand with their enemies. They accordingly were not remiss : but bestirred themselves in good time : and *smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword :—and did what they would to those who hated them* ‡. It is plain therefore, contrary to Mr. Gibbon's assertion, that “ a legal defence was allowed to this submissive people, and their resistance not only dreaded, but severely felt. And so great was the fear of the Jews upon the people of the land, that many became proselytes to their religion §. We find that in all the provinces there are some particular people mentioned as enemies : even *in the palace of Shushan, they slew five hundred men* ||. Who were these men ; and who were those in other places thus slain by the Jews ? Not Medes, nor Persians, we may be assured ; nor Babylonians : for *all the rulers of the*

\* Daniel, c. vi. 8.

† Esther, c. viii. 8.

‡ C. ix. v. 5.

§ C. viii. v. 17. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 6.

|| C. ix. v. 6.

provinces,

provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews \*. They would not have afforded this assistance so universally against their own nation, and their own families. These enemies of the Jews were the Amalekites, Edomites, Moabites, Philistines, and other nations in captivity. From this we may infer, how deep the scheme was laid: and at the same time, in what estimation the Jews were held. For they were in every place assisted by the natives; who seem to have held in abhorrence the treachery, which had been conceived against them. I cannot help thinking, that the 83d Psalm was composed upon this occasion: though it is mentioned as a Psalm of Asaph. It is a noble composition; and particularly adapted to the circumstances of this history. *Keep not thou silence, O God: for lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lift up their head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy bidden ones †. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation: that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee. The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites: of Moab and the Hagarenes. Gebal and Amalek: the Philistines and those of Tyre. Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot.* I know no time when Assur can be supposed to have been confederate with the Tyrians, Philistines, Amalekites, Ammonites, and the other people specified, except the time here mentioned: when they were all in the same state of captivity.

\* C. ix. v. 3.

† תְּסִיִּיִם thy secreted people.

With

With this season the confederacy agrees very well.

The history of Esther has been greatly misunderstood : and grievously perverted : but when properly considered ; it is found to be of much consequence : and places the Jewish nation, even during their captivity, in a very favourable light. It is said of this people, that when they put their enemies to death, *they laid not their hand on the spoil* \*, though it was permitted them to take it. They left it probably for the king : and thereby shewed that they did not act upon mercenary views ; but merely to secure their own lives and properties. The spoil of the Jews had been granted to Haman, if his design had succeeded : and he seems to have accepted of it. Hence we may infer, that when he promised the king ten thousand talents of silver, that they were to have arisen from spoil and confiscation : so that the Jews could not have been in a state of indigence and servility. It is remarkable, that when the queen expostulates with the king in favour of her people, she tells him—*We are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue* †. There is nothing here, nor in any history extant, which can induce us to believe, that the Jews were *the vilest portion of slaves* : on the contrary, it is past contradiction manifest that they were not in a state of slavery : but as free as other people ; and held in equal honour.

How great this deliverance was, as well as how certain the history, may be known from the feast of Purim, which was instituted in commemoration

\* C. ix. v. 10.

† C. vii. ver. 4.

of it; which is still annually kept up. We read in the second book of Maccabees\*, that Judas having obtained a great victory over Nicanor, they ordained it should be commemorated upon the 13th of Adar, *the day before the feast of Mordecai*. This proves both the antiquity of the feast of Purim, and the reception of the history on which it was founded. It is so named from a kind of divination by fire; to which Haman had recourse in order to know the success of his machinations. We may presume that he had proper assurances; but his dæmon deceived him at the close, and gave him over to ignominy and ruin.

It is natural to enquire, what great and powerful cause produced this wonderful and extraordinary change in affairs? "The beauty of Esther," says our philosophic historian: "*had ESTHER been less lovely, or less beloved, a single day would have consummated the universal slaughter of a submissive people*†," &c.

If his producing this instance as a proof of the despicable state of the Jews, was surprising, much more so is the turn of his comment! How constantly does he keep in view his favourite hypothesis of resolving the exertions and interpositions of Providence into secondary causes! With this it suits well to ascribe the preservation of the *Jews* to the beauty of Esther, and her influence with Ahasuerus. I can compare his reflection to nothing but the licentious, though juvenile, expression of the poet,

A wife! ah, gentle Deities! can he  
That has a wife e'er feel adversity?

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Ch. xv. v. 37. See also Esther, c. ix. v. 20—28.

† Vind. p. 25.



“ At Hester’s suit the persecuting sword  
 “ Was sheath’d, and Israel liv’d to blefs the Lord\*.”

That Esther’s beauty influenced Ahasuerus, and consequently made him favourable to her petition, cannot be doubted ; but did not Mordecai point out the real cause, when he told her *who* “ knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this ; intimating, that “ God raised her up to the dignity in which she “ was, on purpose that she might be the deliverer “ of her people †.” In short, *Reason* as well as *Faith*, to whose dictates Mr. Gibbon now and then affects to attend, might have prevailed on him to impute the amazing change to the *providence* of the God of Israel, who, in order to preserve his favoured people from the destruction threatened by the treacherous artifices of the cruel Haman, changed the heart of the weak king, and raised up *Esther* and Mordecai as powerful advocates to rescue the Jews, and avenge them of their enemies.

Neither the Jews, nor Esther herself, relied on the power of her charms ; and what is remarkable, she did not think herself in favour at that time, “ having not been called to come in unto the “ king for thirty days ‡ :” but she and the *Jews* fasted and “ offered up prayer and humble sup-  
 “ plication to God to prosper her in her undertak-  
 “ ing.”

I cannot close this wonderful history better than

\* Pope’s January and May.

† Esther. c. iv. 14. and Patrick’s exposition.

‡ Esther, c. iv. 11. 16. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 6. sect. 7, 8. In the decree of Artaxerxes, which Josephus gives us, we find it entirely attributed to the operation of God. Τὸ παρὰ φόρωντος ΘΕΟΥ ταύτην αὐτὴ τὴν δίκην ἐπιβαλοντος— ταύτην γὰρ αὐτοῖς ὁ ΘΕΟΣ, ἀντὶ τοῦ ληθρίας, σώτηριον πεποιήκειν.— l. xi. c. 6. sect 12. Ed. Hudson. Oxon.

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in the pious reflection which we read in Bishop Patrick's Comment, who, with other Expositors\*, attributes the whole to *the special providence of God.*

“ In this wonderful deliverance of the *Jewish* nation there was no extraordinary manifestation of God's power, no particular cause or agent, that was in it's working advanced above the ordinary pitch of nature; and yet the contrivance or suiting of those ordinary agents appointed by God, is more admirable than if the same end had been effected by means truly miraculous†.

Our Historian asserts likewise, that “ the books “ of *Ezra* and *Nebemiah* do not afford a very “ pleasing view of the situation of the Jews under “ the *Persian* empire ‡.” I am sorry to say, that Mr. Gibbon does not seem to be very conversant in the sacred writings, however versed he may be in profane history.

For, one of the most interesting circumstances relating to the state of the Jews in captivity, is the event with which the history of *Ezra* commences.—He informs us, that in the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, a proclamation was made throughout all the kingdom; wherein full leave was given to the Jews to return to Jerusalem; and to rebuild their temple. The words of this edict are remarkable—*Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia: The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth: and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.*

\* Prideaux's Connection, vol. i. p. 244—250. See Patrick's Comment. on Esther, ch. ii. 17. iii. 7. vi. 1, &c.

† Reflections on Esther, c. vii. See the remainder of this admirable passage.

‡ Vind. p. 24.

We find here much matter comprised in small compass: and the whole is of great importance. We learn that in the very first year of the king's reign; before, one would imagine, the great affairs of his empire could be well settled, he turns his thoughts to the Jews, and to their concerns. *Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin: and the Priests and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem* \*. This was an arduous undertaking; and very expensive: what means had they, which could make them expect, that they should be able to carry it into execution? We are told that they were in no wise destitute, for they set out *with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things: besides all that was willingly offered* †. In this account we find not the least sign, that the Jews had been in a low, abject, and ignominious state: on the contrary, if we may judge by these tokens, they seem to have enjoyed a great share of freedom, affluence, and security. But our Historian asserts, that “the nation (of the Jews) “seemed to be *dissolved*, or *annihilated*, by the “hardships and oppressions, they suffered ‡.” This could not have been the case; for if it had, the people of the Jews would no longer have remained distinct, but themselves and their names would have been lost, and mixed with the inhabitants of the land: yet we know they did separate from them, and many returned to Jerusalem. Can he produce a single instance of the hardships under which they are said to be oppres-

\* Ezra, c. i. v. 5. See also 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20—23.

† Ver. 6.

‡ Vind. p. 23.

sed,

fed, with which the other captive nations were not affected? How then can they be called the *most despised* portion of their slaves? Nay, on the contrary, they suffered less than Moab, Ammon, Edom, Amalek, Palestine, Damascus, Hamath. These nations were carried into captivity, and not one of them was reinstated.—But, continues he, “the band of exiles who returned to inhabit the land of their fathers was inconsiderable\*.” Very true; and therefore I concluded before in my *Examination*, that “*those who staid behind must have been in a state of free service †.*” Nor is the opinion singular; the learned Dean *Prideaux* draws a similar conclusion. “It is most certain, that notwithstanding the several decrees that had been granted by the kings of *Persia* for the return of the *Jews* into their own land, there were a great many that waved taking the advantage of them, and continued still in *Chaldea* and *Assyria*, and other Eastern provinces, where they had been carried, and it is most likely that they were of *the best and richest* of the nation that did so. For when they had gotten *houses and lands in those parts*, it cannot be supposed that such would be very forward to leave *good settlements*, to new plant a country that had lain many years desolate. But of what sort soever they were, it is certain a great many staid behind, and never returned again into their own country. And if we may guess at their number from the family of *Aaron*, they must have been many more than those who settled again in *Judea ‡.*”—These inferences are very different from those of Mr. G.; and yet are they drawn

\* Vind. p. 23.

† Exam. p. 3.

‡ *Prideaux's Connect.* vol. i. p. 108, fol. ed. Lond. 1717.

from the same premises. We see the Dean supposes many of them to be in a rich and flourishing condition, enjoying houses, lands, and good settlements \*.

Besides

\* Josephus, *Antiq. Jud.* l. xi. c. 1, says, πολλοὶ δὲ κατεμείναν ἐν τῇ Βαβυλωνίᾳ, τὰ κτήματα καταλίποντες ἢ θέλοντες.

Dean *Prideaux* here follows the opinion which is grounded on the positive testimony of *Josephus*; that the ten tribes even in his days remained in immense numbers beyond the Euphrates. But I shall lay before my reader substantial reasons for supposing the authority to be insufficient.

Josephus says, Ὁ δὲ πᾶς λαὸς τῶν Ἰσραηλῆταιν κατὰ χώραν ἔμεινε. δύο καὶ δύο φυλάς ἵνα συμβέηκεν ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ Ἀσίου καὶ τῆς Εὐρώπης Ῥωμαίοις ὑπακούσας. Αἱ δὲ δέκα φυλαὶ πέραν εἰσὶν ἐτφρατοῦ ἕως ἀφτρο μῦριαδες ἀπειροὶ καὶ ἀριθμῷ γινώσθηναι μὴ δύναμεναι. *Antiq. Jud.* l. xi. c. 5. sect. 2.

And *Ammianus Marcellinus* tells us, that “when Julian” marched towards Babylonia, he found upon the Euphrates “a large city whose inhabitants were Jews.” L. xxiv. c. 4.

Let us now follow the thread of his history, and see if this can be reconciled with his own narration.

In consequence of the decree of Cyrus, the main body of the *Jewish* nation, among whom, it is probable, were many of the *Israelites*, carried away by the first *Assyrian* conquerors, returned to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel.—The like was the case in the subsequent returns under Esdras and Nehemiah.—And so all became in country and government united with the joint tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

The expeditions of Darius, and afterwards of Xerxes, into Europe, might be the means of bringing back still more of the *Israelites* from the eastern provinces.—In the time of Alexander, we know there were still Jews or *Israelites* resident in Babylon and Media; for their brethren at Jerusalem petitioned the Macedonian that the privileges he had granted to themselves might be extended to them also. *Joseph. Ant.* l. xi. c. 5. sub finem.

The favour, however, which this prince, and some of his successors, in Egypt and Syria, afterwards shewed to this nation, and the great confidence they were wont to place in them, would naturally induce many more to leave the remote parts of the empire. *Ibid.* l. xii. c. 1. 3. Compare also *Joseph. contra Apion.* l. ii. sect. 4, 5.

Antiochus

Besides these instances of private wealth, the king restores to the Jews all the sacred vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away. These were very numerous and costly ; such as few kingdoms at the time could have furnished : and no other

Antiochus M. in particular, summoned two thousand families from Babylon and Mesopotamia, granting them dwellings and lands in Asia, with many other advantages. L. xii. c. 3. sect. 4.

Seleucus Nicator first granted them settlements in his new cities. L. xii. c. 3. See also Universal History, vol. iii. p. 518. 544. fol. ed.

These causes were sufficient to bring back the greater part of the *Israelites*, who, coming by degrees, would be united in every respect with those originally established by the decrees of Cyrus and Artaxerxes. And if any remained behind, it is probable they were so few as to be swallowed up by the heathen nations ; and lose all memory of their religion and origin. Thus Asia, Europe, and Lybia came to swarm with such multitudes of Jews ; and the distinction of their tribes to be little noticed.—And it can hardly be credited, that in the time of Josephus a great nation of *ISRAELITES*, infinite in numbers, were known to inhabit beyond the *Euphrates*.—That country was then well known ; and traversed afterwards as late as the time of Trajan—yet are no where traces to be found of such a people. And in these modern days of commerce, and curious enquiry of every sort, that country has been long frequented by Europeans, and a particular search made for such a people—yet none are found either there or any where else on the face of the earth.

We have every reason, therefore, to believe that the dispersed Jews now subsisting are the descendants of those who, after the decline of the Greek empire, became subject to the Romans ; and comprehend individuals of every tribe, as well as of Judah and Benjamin :—though the name of *Israelites* was lost ; and all were known by the general denomination of Jews. And this opinion seems most conformable to the several prophecies respecting the dispersion, and the future union and restoration of this people.

I cannot therefore help suspecting, that the words 'ΑΙ ΔΕ ΔΕΚΑ ΦΥΑΑΙ, &c. to ΔΥΝΑΜΕΝΑΙ, are not originally the words of *Josephus*, but the marginal note of some Jewish or Christian reader, after the growth of that error, foisted into the text.

prince would have restored ; for those of gold and silver are said to have been in number no less than five thousand four hundred. With this accumulation of wealth the Jews returned to their own country. But whence did it proceed, that they were so highly favoured ? and how came they, above all other conquered nations, to be entitled to this particular enlargement ? It was partly on account of the known worth and excellence of the Jewish nation ; but it was more particularly effected in consequence of the many predictions, which their prophets had at times disclosed ; and which the events had wonderfully confirmed. Ezra mentions very truly the prophecies of Jeremiah. But those, which must have wrought most with Cyrus, were the predictions of Isaiah. They are particularly alluded to in the words of Cyrus, when he says, “ *God hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah \**.” This prophet had also foretold, more fully than any other, the downfall of the Babylonish empire ; and not only mentions its ruin ; but tells by whom, and in what manner, it was to be brought about. He speaks of the Persians as the future subverters of that monarchy ; when there is reason to think, that the existence of the people was scarcely known in Judea. He addresses himself to *Cyrus* by name, above an hundred years before the birth of that prince ; and points out in what manner he should take the city ; mentioning that *the river* should be made *dry* for the passage of his army ; and *the gates of brass* should not withstand his power. All which we know from the Grecian writers to have been literally accomplished. It was also said, that by his means the temple at Jerusalem should be

\* Ezra, c. i. ver. 2.

restored.

restored. When therefore he had taken Babylon, and was in possession of the whole empire, how great must have been his astonishment, when he found every thing which he had accomplished so precisely and determinately foretold? And in all this there could be no room for any deceit: for there must have been copies of these prophetic writings in most parts of the kingdom; and innumerable vouchers to prove the authenticity of these oracles. There had been prophecies about the Assyrians, and the ruin of their state; and the Babylonians were conscious of the same evils being predicted against them; and by these nations many truths could be ascertained. They had experienced the completion of many of these predictions; and their authority was too convincing to leave any doubt. Hence it was, that Cyrus, in his very first year, amidst all his public concerns, thought nothing of more consequence than his making a proper return to the divine power, which had manifested itself so plainly in his favour. He made a proclamation, wherein he gave leave to all the Jews, who should choose it, to return to their country, and rebuild their temple. At the same time he made them those noble presents above mentioned—promises, in his decree, to discharge himself the expence of the building—grants them the same honours which their ancestors enjoyed—allows them a supply from the tributes of Samaria, and threatens those who disobey these commands with confiscation and death\*; and ordered all his officers in the western parts of his dominion to assist the Jews towards the accomplishing of their

\* Την δε εις ταυτα δαπανην, εκ τε εμαυτη γενεσθαι βυλομαι—συγχωρω δε αυτοις και την εκ προγονων ειδικσμενην τιμην—κελευω δε την τουτων χορηγίαν εκ των της Σαμαρειας γενεσθαι φορων. κ. τ. λ. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. i.

great



great purpose. Had he delayed his orders to the tenth, twelfth, or any subsequent year, people might surmise, that the prophecies were of later date; and made after the event: but the early date of the proclamation leaves not any room for such contrivance. Indeed it was morally impossible for the Jews, so circumstanced as we know them to have been, to have carried any such design into execution: for the natives would have detected and exposed them. The prophecies were certainly true, and well authenticated; the consequences with which they were attended shew it. For nothing but mere predictions could have certified that they were the people of God; and that the divine power still interested itself in their favour. There is otherwise no accounting for the particular notice taken of them above other people; nor for their final return: a blessing, to which the rest of the captivated nations were never, that we know of, entitled. The same indulgences which they had received from Cyrus, they experienced from other princes. Darius, in the second year of his reign, not only confirmed the decree of Cyrus, in favour of the Jews, but enlarged it greatly, and surpassed him in kindness:—"He gave the Jews  
 " a certificate of their liberty, forbade his officers  
 " to exact tribute of them, made their country  
 " free, commanded the Idumeans, Samaritans,  
 " and the inhabitants of Cœlo-Syria, to leave the  
 " Jewish towns, which they possessed, and to con-  
 " tribute 500 talents towards building the tem-  
 " ple \*:" and his decree expresses *"that of the  
 " king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the ri-  
 " ver, forthwith expences be given unto these men,*

\* Παντας εγραψεν ελευθερος ειναι τες εις την Ιουδαιαν των αιχμα-  
 λωτων απελθοντας, κ. τ. λ. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 3.  
 sect. 8.

“ for the building of this house of God, that they  
 “ be not hindered :” he threatens their enemies  
 “ with death, and grants them the free exercise of  
 “ their religion \*.”

In the reign of Artaxerxes, Ezra was commissioned by the king and his counsellors, to go up to Jerusalem, accompanied by those of his countrymen who were thus minded, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem : and to carry the silver and the gold which the king and his counsellors have *freely offered* unto the God of Israel—with orders to receive from the king’s treasure-house whatever more should be needful—his treasurers were to answer Ezra’s requests, to a certain measure—and they were not to impose tribute or custom on the priests, Levites, or other ministers of the house of God †. And afterwards, when the Jews were oppressed by their enemies, and their city injured : this same *Artaxerxes* issued out a decree for the rebuilding of the city, and appointed *Nebemiah* governor, sent a guard with him, and letters to the king’s governors to assist him with supplies and prosecute the work ‡.

“ The books therefore of *Ezra* and *Nebemiah*  
 “ afford a *very pleasing view* of the situation of the  
 “ Jews under *some* of the *Persian* emperors ;” as  
 well as an unpleasing view of the oppressions and injuries they sustained from others. Thus the temple was rebuilt, the city reinstated, and the Jewish polity restored. In the prosecution of these designs, they

\* Ezra, c. vi. ver 7—12. Prideaux’s Connections, vol. i. p. 153.

† Ezra, c. vii. viii. In Josephus he is called Xerxes. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 5. See Prideaux, vol. i. p. 182. 205. 254. &c.

‡ Nehemiah, c. i. ii. &c. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 5. sect. 6, &c. Prideaux, part i. book 6.

were

were undoubtedly impeded by their enemies, who were averse to their establishment and increase \*. And from whence did this ill will proceed? Was it from contempt, and disdain: because they had been a low and servile people? No: by no means: it was because they had been a great, and respectable nation: and were dreaded even in ruin. The very reason given at one time for stopping their progress is said to be, because—*there have been mighty kings over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all the countries beyond the river: and toll, tribute, and custom was paid unto them* †. They are the words of Artaxerxes: whose jealousy had been raised from a consideration of what this people had been, and from a fear of their future greatness.

From the whole then we may observe, that the very arguments which our author advances, in his *Vindication*, to confirm his former assertion, that “the Jews were the most despised portion of slaves,” destroy his general design.

He does however so far favour them, as to allow that they *emerged from their obscurity under the successors of Alexander*.

How constantly does he describe every circumstance relative to this extraordinary people to their disadvantage, when he could fairly place them in a more favourable light! He speaks of their obscurity in such an absolute, yet indeterminate, manner, that one would imagine they had been at all times a low and ignoble people. But in reality they were never in a state of obscurity from the

\* The decree of *Cyrus* was in some measure obstructed in its intent by the enemies of the Jews, who bribed the king's ministers. And in the reign of *Cambyses*, the building of the temple and city was totally impeded. Joseph. Antiq. l. xi. c. 2. Prideaux's Connect. vol. i. p. 127. 145.

† Ezra, c. iv. ver. 20.

beginning,

beginning, no not even the Patriarchs before them, from whom they were descended. Though they were only sojourners in a foreign land, yet respect and reverence followed them wherever they pitched their tents; even kings and princes sued for their benediction and favour: so that in their state of pilgrimage they exhibited more genuine and native magnificence than Solomon in all his glory. Their descendants became a very numerous and a very respectable people; and few kingdoms could vie with that which they possessed. Though our author has said, that *they singly refused to join in the common intercourse of mankind*; we know it was their fault to mix too much with their idolatrous neighbours, and to copy their worship and their vices. It had been happy for them, if they had never *embraced*, or even *respected the superstitions* of the world; but had *singly opposed* themselves to the temptation. They were too yielding, and fell accordingly; and for their punishment were carried into captivity. But even in this state they were more respected than any people upon record in the like circumstances. They were at last permitted to return, and soon recovered their former greatness; which our author is pleased to describe, as *emerging from their obscurity*. He moreover says, that *it was under the successors of Alexander*. But what does it signify at what period it happened? the wonder is that it was ever effected. The *Assyrians, Medes, and Babylonians* were ruined; but they never recovered themselves. The nations also which were neighbours to the Jews, suffered in the same manner, and nearly at the same time, that they did; but they never came back, and their name scarcely survived in history. The same may be said of the *Tyrians, Sidonians, Egyptians, Macedonians, and*  
1
Carthaginians,

Carthaginians, who were all in their time conquered and brought to ruin ; but were never reinstated. As our Historian so often draws a parallel to the disadvantage of the Jews, he should for once make a comparison in their favour. It may possibly be said, that here they stand *single* ; and it must be confessed that they do : in this part of their history, as well as in many others, the hand of Providence is very visible ; and therefore it does not become an impartial writer to omit a circumstance so interesting and of such consequence.

As the emerging of the Jews from obscurity had been referred by Mr. Gibbon to the *successors of Alexander*, it was observed by me, in my *Examination*, that “ the Jews never found any more “ bitter enemies than *some* of these kings \*.” So far from being of any advantage, they injured the Jewish nation, and impeded its increase. Some of them invaded their country ; others, who were more friendly, engaged them, as allies, in war, which was a circumstance nearly as fatal. Others draughted away the best of the nation for colonies, and carried them into different parts. Mr. Gibbon being pressed with these arguments very wisely alters his whole order of battle. He accordingly tells us, his meaning was, that the honour and repute of the Jews, and their state, arose from *these numerous colonies*. Those who were carried away, were *fixed by the kings of Asia and Egypt, in Antioch, Alexandria, &c. who placed them ισοπολιτας, ισοτιμους, in the same honourable condition as the Greeks and Macedonians themselves*. I observed also before, that “ Ptolemy the son of Lagus at “ one sweep carried off an hundred thousand of

\* Exam. p. 4-

“ the

“ the inhabitants of Judea ; of which thirty thousand were chosen persons, whom he forced to serve in his armies †.” Yet I never thought that this could have been any benefit to the country, or to the Jews in general : for at this rate we must suppose, that to impoverish a land is the only way to improve it ; and that to drain a person’s best blood, and lop off a limb or two, is the only way to give him health and spirits. But it is in vain to contend on this matter with Mr. Gibbon, as our ideas of cruelty and calamities are so widely different. He can calmly speak of the taking away captive ten thousand of the inhabitants of Judea, and the demolishing of their metropolis, as “ *the transient ravages* of an advancing or retreating enemy, who led away a multitude of captives ‡.” But, he pleasantly tells us, that the Jews in these settlements got a *knowledge of the world* || ; and were besides held in equal honour with the natives ; and that this countenances all he said in the passage about their *emerging*, &c. We, to be sure, may infer from this circumstance, that wherever they came, they were respected above other foreigners, and could not be that base and ignoble people which he has elsewhere represented them. But to imagine that the reputation of the Jewish people was owing to these exiles, is an idle and preposterous surmise. The honour and grandeur of the nation arose from the dignity of the priesthood, the magnificence of the temple, the sumptuousness of their other buildings, the populous-

† Exam. p. 4.

‡ Vind. p. 26.

|| Mr. G. says, in his History, “ A larger acquaintance with mankind extended their knowledge without correcting their prejudices,” &c. p. 453. c. xv.

ness

ness and wealth of the country, and the respect paid to the princes and nobility of the land. As to the colonies at *Antioch* and other places, how little do we know of them? Let them have been ever so honourably received, they added little to the lustre of the Jewish state; but served only to drain and impoverish what they are supposed to have upheld. They got, it seems, a *knowledge of the world*; but I believe (like our modern adepts in this science) they paid very dearly for it; and that the regard shewed to them was not always of long duration. At *Alexandria*, though they might not be treated as *the vilest portion of slaves*, yet they were insulted, robbed, plundered; and great numbers of them racked, imprisoned, burnt alive, crucified, and otherwise put to death; all which added little to the credit of the nation §. But be their treatment as it may, what is it to the purpose of our Historian? How can he be so disingenuous as to avail himself of such a poor subterfuge? How can he assure us, when he is speaking in general of the Jewish nation *emerging from obscurity*, that he refers to its colonies, and to *their being introduced to the knowledge of the world*? His original meaning is plain, whatever gloss he may put upon it.

It may not perhaps be necessary to dispute what he says about the Jews in the next sentence:—*And as they multiplied to a surprising degree in the East, and afterwards in the West, they soon excited the curiosity and wonder of other nations.* There is however nothing of this sort, that I know of, upon record; and the whole seems to have been only a vague sentiment, sported occasionally. Had any such curiosity prevailed, we might expect that a

§ Philo adversus Flaccum.

diligent

diligent enquiry would have been the consequence; whereby this people would have been well known; and their history better ascertained by the Pagan writers. We should not then have been told, that the Jews were from Crete, and denominated from Mount Ida; that they were led to their place of settlement by Judas and Hierosolymus; and that they were the same people as the Idæi Dactyli; the same also as the Solymi of Lycia, mentioned by Homer: that they were six days in travelling to their place of settlement; and that they got possession of it upon the seventh; which was on that account held sacred; or else because there are seven planets \*. That they were the children of Semiramis, and came originally from Thebes, being led from thence by Bacchus, whom they particularly worshipped. That they also worshipped an ass, an hog, and the clouds; or, as others maintained, that they payed their adoration to *nothing*. Lastly, that the head of an ass was found in their temple. These and many other idle notions were entertained about this people, which do not seem to have taken their rise from *curiosity* and *wonder*, but from indifference and neglect.

This however is of little consequence, in comparison with what Mr. Gibbon advances, in disrespect to their law and their manners. *The sullen obstinacy*, says he, *with which they maintained their peculiar rites and unsocial manners, seemed to mark them out as a distinct species of men.*

These are severe allegations, which he has heightened with greatest acrimony, in order to depreciate the Jewish people. We know nothing

\* See Tacitus, Hist. l. xv. also Dio; Justin; and Steph. Byzantinus, &c.



of this *fullen obstinacy*, which is here laid to their charge, nor is this accusation authorised by history. They had their peculiar rites, which were very significant, and of great consequence; however idle and ridiculous our author may suppose them. They were enjoined them by the God whom they worshipped; and they were commanded never to depart from them. They accordingly did abide by them; and in this observance what *fulleness* or *obstinacy* did they betray, more than people of other countries, who conformed to the religion of their fathers? The more pure their religion, the more were they justified in adhering to it. The Jews admitted no image of the Deity; they abstained from the flesh of particular animals; they performed uniform ablutions; and maintained other rites: but these were observed more or less by other nations; by the Gaditani; by the Egyptians; by the Samanæi of Bactria; by the Hylobii, Brachmans, and Gymnosophists of India; by the Druids and Saronidæ in Gaul; and by the disciples of Pythagoras\*. All these adhered to particular rites, some of which were similar to those of the Jews; yet who ever imputed to them either fulleness or obstinacy? But Mr. Gibbon takes great pleasure in representing things in an unfavourable light: he accordingly observes, that they were so determined in their received opinions, that Antiochus could not by any means bring them off from their religious attachments; and yet he made use of no small *violence* †. But what was it that this king so earnestly

\* I mention these because they had no image in their temple. See Silius Italicus.

† “ Neither the *violence* of Antiochus,” says Mr. Gibbon, “ nor

nestly required? Among other things, that they would feed upon the flesh of swine; which their soul abhorred. On this account great numbers were put to death; and among the rest seven brothers, with their mother, underwent the most cruel tortures. Now this abstinence, exclusive of its being a divine ordinance, was perfectly innocent\*; nor could Antiochus in particular, nor the Syrians in general, be at all affected by it. Why might not the Jews abstain from swine's flesh, as well as the Pythagoreans from beans, the Egyptians from the flesh of sundry animals, the Brachmans from all flesh whatever? Yet this fierce and merciless tyrant, contrary to all equity and humanity, would force it upon them; and they with the greatest constancy refused it. They died in consequence of their perseverance; and there were others to a large amount put to the most cruel kinds of death, because they would not violate the divine law. All this, which any unprejudiced person would have esteemed magnanimity and fortitude, is by our author stiled *obstinacy and sullenness*†. He does indeed go so far as to allow that Antiochus, this most detestable example of inhumanity, “*adopted new maxims of tyranny*.” Surely this is a very gentle mode of expressing his barbarous cruelties; but as the objects of his vengeance were the *despicable Jews*, our mild Historian views their sufferings with the same unfeeling indifference as

“nor the arts of Herod, nor the example of the circumja-  
cent nations, could ever persuade the Jews to associate  
with the institutions of Moses, the elegant mythology of  
the Greeks.”—History, c. xv. p. 451.

\* See a *Dissertation* by the learned Mr. Jones on the *Jewish distinction between clean and unclean animals*.

† The humane Pliny, in like manner, calls the perseverance of the Christians, *pervicacia & inflexibilis obstinatio*.

that in which he describes the horrid persecutions which the wretched Christians suffered ; and can, with equal grace, apologise for the violence of Antiochus, and the inhumanity of Maximin. What a pity it is that a person of his abilities and judgment should be guilty of such wilful misconception !

After all, what is it that the advocate of the Pagans could wish to have done ? How could the Jews have merited his approbation ? Why by relinquishing the worship of the *one true God* ; and going over to the polytheism and superstitions of the Heathen. This is plainly intimated. But to which party would he have had them join themselves ? For, as I before observed, there was no uniformity in the Pagan world ; and it may be difficult even for him to determine which religious order they ought to have made their option. Should they have betaken themselves to Moloch, or to Baal ; to Mithras or Ammon ; or to the Ape and Onions of Egypt ? I am afraid that Mr. Gibbon would have been very indifferent about the worship, if only a change had been made. If they had deserted the God of their fathers, and abused the religion in which they had been instituted, he would have esteemed them a complying and rational people ; of a liberal turn, and of a noble and enlarged disposition. As they hesitated, they are deemed *sullen* and *obstinate*, and condemned to infamy.

Nor is this language sufficiently harsh ; it is further said by our impartial Historian, that they *boldly professed, or faintly disguised, their implacable hatred to the rest of mankind*. That the Jews were not conformists with the world in general, in respect to religious worship, is past controversy true : but there were other sects and tribes,

tribes, and even whole nations, in the same predicament; none of which were on this account deemed culpable. On the contrary, they are often spoken of with admiration for persevering in their abstinence and purity; and for a fixed attachment to their religious duties. In other respects we have no reason to think that the Jews were enemies to society: we know that they got access into various regions in the Roman empire; and even in some countries beyond it. Now does it not seem a paradox, that people of so unfociable a turn should thus covet to mix with different nations; nations with which they could not originally have had the least connexion or acquaintance? As they are said to have *hated* these nations, they must have been reciprocally *detested by them*; all which heightens the paradox; for how they could have maintained themselves in such an hostile situation? How can we account for people unnecessarily bringing themselves into such a disagreeable state of life, when they had a country of their own, where they might have resided at their ease, and prosecuted their worship without the least molestation? In short, the whole that Mr. Gibbon brings upon this head is general invective: he follows his favourite Tacitus implicitly; who does not afford a single fact to support his own narration. There are writers who speak of them in a different light. It was long before the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, that the Jews betook themselves to the various regions which I mentioned above: had there existed among them any such sullen and unfociable disposition, attended with this *implacable hatred*, we should have had it authenticated by its effects. The consequences which would naturally have ensued, must have been animosities, seditions, treasons,

sons, bloodshed, with either banishment or extirpation; but we find nothing of this sort in any of the cities or states where they were dispersed. There were wars and tumults all over the world, from the time of Alexander to the reign of Augustus Cæsar: but in all these commotions and troubles the name of a Jew seldom occurs out of Judea. They do not seem to have had any share in the rise and fall of states; nor in the policies of the world. In all the countries through which they were scattered, they appear to have behaved peaceably and loyally; and with great prudence to have avoided both public and private feuds\*. Though they were very numerous, we read not of any robbery, or act of violence; and seldom of any sedition laid to their charge; and though at times they were grievously persecuted, they do not seem to have shewn a persecuting spirit, not even in their own country: all the ill-will towards them was on account of their aversion to idolatry and Polytheism; and their not conforming to the worship of the people where they resided. When Apion was delegated to accuse the Jews before Caligula, the only accusation which he could bring, of any consequence, was, that they would not swear by the emperor's name, nor consecrate statues to his honour†. Their not being able to comply with these demands necessa-

\* Josephus has recorded a particular instance of the respect the Jews met with from Augustus, and the influence they had with him.

"The Jews," says he, "being no longer able to endure the tyranny of Archelaus, accused him before Augustus; which they did with the more confidence, because they knew that the emperor had expressly commissioned him to govern his subjects with all manner of kindness and justice." *Μη φοβόντες την ὀμότητα αὐτοῦ καὶ τυραννίδα, κ. τ. λ.* Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xvii. c. 15.

† Vid. Joseph. contra Apion. & Philo.

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rily procured them many enemies. In other respects they seem to have kept up a friendly intercourse with the natives, and a correspondence with other people. The emperor Julian, in after times, intimates, that the Jews were industrious and good members of the community : and he tells us, what is remarkable, and equally true at this day, that no Jew was ever seen a beggar. He likewise adds, that they contributed largely towards the exigencies of the empire ; more indeed than was their share : from great part of which burden he thought proper to free them \*. The account given of them by Porphyry is likewise very much in their favour ; and yet Porphyry was as staunch a Pagan as Tacitus †.

That this imputation of *universal hatred* cannot be true, may be in some degree shewn from their Law ; which enjoined love and charity to all. The inhabitants of Canaan, and the Amalekites ; were indeed doomed for proper reasons to the sword ; but good-will and loving-kindness were in every other respect enforced. The children of Israel of old had been basely treated by the Egyptians : yet they were told not to *abhor an Egyptian* : and after a particular time they might admit him to their worship ‡. In the same place it is said, *Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite* : yet the Edomites at a certain season had greatly distressed them. The like is intimated about Moab and Ammon. Their charity was to extend to their servants and slaves : who after a certain interval were to be set free. The slightest appearance of every thing cruel and unnatural was to be avoided. “ *They were not to* “ *seeth a kid in the mother’s milk : nor to muzzle* “ *the ox, which trod out the corn.*” Porphyry ob-

\* Epist. xxv. and xlix.

† Vid. Περὶ ἀποχρῆς, l. v. p. 391—393.

‡ Deuteronomy, c. xxiii. v. 7.

serves, " that they would not hurt any animal, " which took shelter under their roof; though it " were allowed them to feed on it by their law. " They thought it cruel to take such an advantage \*." In all the precepts, conferred upon them, goodness and wisdom were equally tempered. And though people do not always act up to the laws, by which they should be guided; yet we cannot suppose, that they would so far deviate from general love, as to devote themselves to *universal and implacable hatred* †.

The Jews esteemed their law as of divine original: and therefore could not be brought to give it up. They thought the happiness of man depended upon it: on which account they were very zealous in bringing people over to their own persuasion; and *compassed sea and land, heaven and earth, to make one proselyte* ‡. In this they might be too importunate and even troublesome: but it surely proceeded from good-will: and the desire to benefit others is incompatible with that malignity which has been imputed to them. They would never have persevered so universally in this friendly design, if they had shunned all intercourse with others, and been averse to social commerce. All that they avoided was the joining in the popular

\* Περὶ ἀποχρῆς, l. v. p. 393.

† The reader who would see the *Excellency of the Jewish law fairly stated*, will consult, with pleasure and improvement, *two sermons* published by Dr. *Randolph*, on this occasion; and " *The Letters of certain Jews to M. de Voltaire.*"

‡ St. Matthew, xxiii. 15. I must beg leave to differ from Mr. Gibbon, who asserts, that " whenever the God of Israel " acquired any new votaries, he was much more indebted " to the inconstant humour of polytheism than to the active zeal of his missionaries."—History, p. 453.

It is hard to say whether he pays a greater compliment to the judgment and honesty of the Proselyte, or to the excellency of the Jewish law.

worship,

worship, and mixing in the affairs of state, and of the politicks of the people among whom they resided. They could not engage in any civil employments, nor accept offices of consequence, because they could not swear by the gods, nor be present at the solemn sacrifices. They did not partake of the public feasts, because *they could not eat any thing, which had been offered to idols*. They could not “in these instances comply with the fashion of their country, however *innocent and elegant* the practice,” may appear to our historian \*. Nor did they frequent the public games; as they deemed such an intercourse a pollution. This is the whole of that supposed abhorrence: which they neither *boldly professed* nor *faintly disguised*; but calmly and conscientiously maintained, as they esteemed it their bounden duty.

Having closed my remarks upon the *Jews* and their *religion*, and vindicated them from the groundless aspersions of our Historian; I shall now briefly recapitulate what I have advanced.

I have shewn, that the *religious harmony* of the ancient world, so pompously described by Mr. Gibbon, in reality never existed;—that the Jews were not distinguished from other nations by an *intolerant* zeal:—that they were not subject to the *Assyrian* empire; for the Babylonian and Assyrian were not the same people:—nor did they languish for many ages under the Persian monarchy, *the most despised portion of their slaves*:—the malignant imputation of *sullen obstinacy*, and *implacable hatred* is confuted: and the excellency of the Jewish law fully displayed.

\* The admirer of the Pagan mythology will see its beauties displayed by the pen of an engaging artist, in the iid and xvth chapters of Mr. Gibbon's History.

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In the large view which I have taken, of the *Jewish* history, a person of less discernment than my opponent might possibly find *some* occasions for cavil and dispute. But, as my argument in the main is grounded on the truth of history, the reader will justify my assertion, That the representation of this people, of their laws and manners, as given by Mr. Gibbon, must be distorted, and false.—And, I will add, that unless he has been more fair and impartial in describing the state of the *Roman* nation and laws, he must disclaim for ever the lofty title of THE HISTORIAN OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE. It still remains to take some notice of the other charge, which, in my *Examination*, I had alleged against my adversary; I mean that of

### PLAGIARISM.

On this head I shall say but little, as Mr. Gibbon is forced to plead guilty to the charge; though he makes several efforts to evade its force.—He says, “according to the opinion which Mr. Davis “has conceived of literary property, to *agree* is “to *follow*, and to *follow* is to *steal* \*.” Not so: there is an evident difference between introducing the same historical facts, and following the connection and thread of history marked out by another; between being impressed with a similar idea, and explaining it in the very same words. Mr. Gibbon himself is so free with others as to charge them with plagiarism if they merely concur in *idea* †. Besides, where the Plagiarist has had recourse to treatises written on *particular* subjects, he

\* Vind. p. 81.

† See an instance in “*The Decline and Fall*,” &c. c. xiii. note 25. “The former *idea*, says Mr. G. he (Dr. Stukeley) “found in Richard of Cirencester:” and c. viii. note 43.

cannot prevent our tracing him out step by step. Of this Mr. G. seemed sensible, as he is obliged to make the following confession.

### MOSHEIM and BEAUSOBRE.

“ If I touch upon the obscure and fanciful theology  
“ of the Gnostics, I can accept without a blush the  
“ assistance of the candid *Beausobre*; and when,  
“ amidst the fury of contending parties, I trace  
“ the progress of ecclesiastical dominion, I am not  
“ ashamed to confess myself the grateful disciple  
“ of the impartial *Mosheim*.

He himself here assigns his reasons for adopting so largely the sentiments of *Mosheim* and *Beausobre*: and, as I am not particular in my opinion, that he borrowed freely from *Barbeyrac* and *Middleton* \*, it may be worth while to see what his motives might be for following *them* also.

### BARBEYRAC.

As to the first, it admirably suited the purpose of Mr. Gibbon “ to copy the dark and dismal picture of the Fathers,” drawn by *Barbeyrac* in his *Traité de la morale des Peres*: for, “ it betrayed the pencil of an enemy †.”

### DAILLE.

And though *Daillé*, being a generous adversary, did not afford him much abuse against the Fathers; yet as he is a rigid censor of them, he furnished Mr. G. with a few observations ‡.

\* See Dr. Chelsum's Preface, and his Remarks, p. 67. Also, “ *A few Remarks*,” &c. by a Gentleman.

† Exam. p. 186. Decline and Fall, p. 514.

‡ Exam. p. 207.

### MIDDLETON.

## MIDDLETON.

When our Historian tells us, Dr. *Middleton* "rose to the highest pitch of scepticism in any wise consistent with religion" \* ; we cannot be at a loss one moment for the reason which induced him to extract so largely from this author, and to retail his objections so liberally: and that indeed not without a seeming excuse; they were sentiments perfectly agreeing with his own. No doubt Dr. Middleton comes the nearest to Mr. Gibbon, they breathe as it were the same atmosphere; though it must be allowed, that were we to fix Mr. Gibbon's station in the Theological Barometer, of which he has framed such a fanciful conceit, it would be, *the degree above the Doctor*; for HE rises to a pitch of scepticism in *no wise* consistent with religion."

## DODWELL.

Mr. *Dodwell*, is another author whom I have asserted, that Mr. Gibbon closely copied †. For this too we can easily account. For though Mr. Dodwell in most points is orthodox, yet his doctrine of *the small number of Martyrs*, coincided with Mr. G.'s view of contradicting the general belief, that an immense number of holy men lost their lives in the cause of Christianity; and sealed their faith with their blood ‡. And there can hardly

\* Vind. p. 83.

† Exam. p. 229.

‡ "To separate," says Mr. G. "a few authentic as well as interesting facts from an undigested mass of fiction and error, is the design of the present chapter." Again, "This probable and moderate computation may teach us to estimate

hardly be a more convincing proof of the reality and extent of this charge, than that I was able to point out from the *Cyprianic Dissertations*, in a great variety of instances, the very same facts, arranged in the very same order as in the History of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. To say, that this was the consequence of their having consulted the same originals, *Eusebius*, *Lactantius*, or the *Augustan history* \*; is as absurd, as if an architect, who had planned one building upon the model of another, should assign as the cause of the similarity, that the materials of both were dug out of the same quarry.

### HUME.

Nor can we wonder, that our author should coincide in sentiments with *David Hume*, which was observed by Dr. Chelsum †, since he introduces him as one of those few Historians who, “since”  
 “the origin of theological factions—have deserved”  
 “the singular praise of holding the balance with a”  
 “steady and equal hand ‡.” After this observation,

“estimate the number of primitive saints and martyrs, who”  
 “sacrificed their lives for the important purpose of intro-”  
 “ducing Christianity into the world.” “*Decline and Fall*,”  
 c. xvi. p. 520. 585.

\* Vind. p. 90.

† Remarks, p. 50.

‡ Vind. p. 123. I have pointed out a passage or two in the course of my *Reply*, which bear a striking resemblance; but if we were to compare the whole of Mr. GIBBON's lively description of the “*True Genius of Polytheism*,” with Mr. HUME's *Natural History of Religion*; we should not hesitate long to determine whether our Historian, who deals only in Originals, made the antient Herodotus his model; or followed the modern philosopher, as affording the best commentary. See *Decline and Fall*, ch. ii. note 3, and the first part of chapters ii. xv. xvi.

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we could not be surprised, if with equal modesty he had ranked *himself* in the number of those, who, “ independent and unconnected, have contemplated with the same indifference, the opinions and interests of the contending parties; or, if they were seriously attached to a particular system, they were armed with a firm and moderate temper, which enabled them to suppress their affections, and to sacrifice their resentments.”

It is pleasant to observe how Mr. Gibbon endeavours to reconcile his claim to *originality* with the confession which he is forced to make, of his being the transcriber of modern compilers.

“ On these occasions, says he, what is the duty of a faithful historian, who derives from some modern writer the knowledge of some ancient testimony, which he is desirous of introducing into his own narrative? It is his duty, and it has been *MY* invariable practice, to consult the original; to study with attention the words, the design, the spirit, the context, the situation of the passage to which I had been referred; and, before I appropriated it to my own use, to justify my own declaration, that *I had carefully examined all the original materials* that could illustrate the subject which I had undertaken to treat\*.”

What a change is here in the stile of our author! How are his boasted claims sunk into nothing! When the Historian of the Roman Empire tells us *he has carefully examined all the original materials*; he means, (and it was rather necessary he should explain himself) that it has been *his invariable practice* humbly to consult modern writers; and when

\* Vind. p. 86.

he

he had been directed to the sources of information which their margin afforded him, to *plume* himself with their erudition, while he carefully concealed his obligations, that *what he had transcribed from their quotations* might pass for his own discoveries. This is indeed an easy way of appearing learned ; but it has been in my power to shew the reader, and perhaps our Author himself is now convinced, that it is not always very safe. Let him therefore, for the future, be cautious how he adopts the sentiments of others, without inquiry, and remember the memorable lines of the poet ;

—“ *Miserum est aliorum incumbere famæ*  
“ *Ne collapsa ruant subductis tecta columnis* \*.”

But, in answer to my proof of his having adopted this mode of compiling history, our author himself says, “ As I had frequently quoted “ *Eusebius, or Cyprian, or Tertullian*, because I “ had read them ; so, in this instance, I only made “ my reference to Tillemont, because I had *not* “ read, and did not possess the works of Athanasius †.”

This is a plain confession of the truth of my charge of plagiarism in one instance : and I have had occasion to take notice of several other such acknowledgements ‡ ; and shall now state one more.

Mr. Gibbon says, “ A rescript of Diocletian, “ which declared *the* old law—had been alleged by me on the respectable authority of Fra Paolo §.”

To a person who has read these words, and seen the proof I have given of his having erred in citing the *Theodosian Code*, in its very first page ;

\* Juvenal Sat. viii. 76.

† Vind. p. 88.

‡ See the above *Reply*, and Vind. p. 53-75.

§ Vind p. 15.

it will not perhaps appear “ *bold in me, to conceive some hopes of persuading my readers, that an Historian who has employed several years of his life, and several hundred pages, on the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire—was forced to borrow, at second-hand his quotations from the Theodosian Code \**.”

These inconsistent assertions are not however to be wondered at in our Historian.

“ *Tel est L'HOMME en effet, il va du blanc au noir,*

“ *Et condamne au matin ses sentimens du Soir.*”

“ But it is useful, continues Mr. G. to borrow the assistance of so many learned and ingenious men, who have viewed the first ages of the Church in every light, and from every situation. If we skilfully combine the passions and prejudices, the hostile motives and intentions of the several theologians, we may frequently extract knowledge from credulity, moderation from zeal, and impartial truth from the most disingenuous controversy †.”

It is very evident, of what great use the moderns were to him, and we still find him at his old work *of skilfully combining the human passions and prejudices* to draw out his philosophical conclusions: with what art and fidelity the design is executed we may be able to guess, after the instances which I have given of his quoting Tillemont as a modern directing him to the antients, and yet even misrepresenting Tillemont's account. But this, it seems, “ *is the honest and industrious manufacturer,*” “ *who has fairly procured the raw materials, and*

\* Vind. p. 91.

† Ibid. p. 83.

“ worked

“ worked them up with a laudable degree of skill  
 “ and success \*.”

Some of my friends kindly pointed out to me the inadvertency which, in a few instances, I had been guilty of, in making Mr. Gibbon take the same passages from two different authors. I was led into it from a notion that he might have had both books before him at the same time, and transcribed in part from each. But this opportunity of attacking me in a vulnerable part was lost, either for want of sagacity, or through warmth of temper. But my adversary shall find me ever ready to give up an error, and, if it is in my power, to correct it.

And here, if it were necessary, I shall be screened by the example of a writer eminent for his critical abilities. My learned reader may recollect, that *Dr. Bentley*, in his *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris*, had represented more than one particular passage as transcribed by his opponent from two different authors †.

Mr. G. most shrewdly suspecting, “ from my  
 “ name, that I am myself of *Cambrian* origin,  
 “ concludes that my patriotism protected him  
 “ from my zeal, in not censuring his comparison  
 “ of Palestine to Wales §.” I shall first give him a more probable reason, which is, that I confined my remarks to his *fifteenth* and *sixteenth* chapters, in which this does not appear. And now in my turn I shall beg leave to suspect, that the *origin* of his *remark* respecting Palestine was from *Voltaire*, only changing the name from *Switzerland* to

\* *Vind.* p. 82.

† *Dissertations on the Epistles of Phalaris*, p. 195. 211: 216. Lond. 1699.

§ *Vind.* p. 156.



*Wales* \*. However, I will readily allow, that his opponents have forced him, in his *Vindication*, to consider the matter more minutely; and to transcribe from *Reland* the *ancient and weighty testimony of Jerom*, to make a figure with. But if Mr. G. ever condescended to look into the answers which were made to Voltaire, he might have seen the objection fully confuted in *the Jews letters*; wherein the causes of the *present* barrenness of Palestine are shewn; which did not exist when the Jews inhabited it. And as to it's being a mountainous country, proof is given, that even at this time, "the mountains in those countries supply the best pastures, and are preferred to the vallies †."

Now that I am speaking of Voltaire and "*the letters of certain Jews*" addressed to him, I should do injustice to my subject if I did not present to

\* Voltaire says, "La Palestine n'était que ce qu'elle est aujourd'hui, le plus mauvais pays de tous ceux qui sont habités dans l'Asie.—Elle est couverte presque partout de rochers arides, sur lesquels il n'y a pas une ligne de terre. Si cette petite province était cultivée, on pourrait la comparer à la Suisse."—"Il est vraisemblable que la Judée fut plus cultivée autrefois quand elle était possédée par les Juifs. Ils avaient été forcés de porter un peu de terre sur les rochers pour y planter des vignes, &c." *Essay sur l'Histoire Generale*, tom. i. p. 337.

Mr. Gibbon's words are "Palestine—was a territory scarcely superior to *Wales*, either in fertility or extent." (*Decline and Fall*, p. 15.) "The face of the country is covered with mountains, which appear for the most part as naked and barren rocks."

"These disadvantages, which now operate in their fullest extent, were formerly corrected by the labours of a numerous people.—The hills were clothed with rich beds of artificial mould—and almost every spot was compelled to yield some production for the use of the inhabitants." *Vind.* p. 154, 155.

† Letters of certain Jews to Mr. de Voltaire, vol. i. p. 382, 383. *Shaw's Travels*.

my reader's view the character of the French infidel as given in the above masterly performance: and it will appear, from drawing a parallel, that if Mr. Gibbon himself had sat for the picture, there could not have been a more striking likeness.

## I.

Mr. Gibbon affects, upon all occasions, to have supported and justified his facts by great authorities; but I have shewn in my *Examination*, that oftentimes he either misunderstands or misrepresents them.

Let us now hear what the *Jews Letters* \* say of *Voltaire*.

“ When a man wants to attack generally-received opinions, and that he has not good reasons to oppose, he strives to prop himself up cunningly, by great authorities: under the shelter of illustrious names, he runs less risque of exposing himself, and he seems to contend to greater advantage, at least for a certain time, and in the opinion of certain readers.”

“ We dare not say, that you never read the works of these learned men; but this we will venture to affirm, either that you have misunderstood the opinions of most of them, or misinterpreted them: at least, you do not speak of them with all that exactness which might be expected from such a writer as you †.”

Again, “ There are too many writers, Sir, who, in order to form an attack, or an apology to greater advantage, make false quotations without

\* I have used the English translation of the *Jews Letters*, as more accommodated to my reader's use.

† *Letters of the Jews*, vol. i. p. 190.

scruple, alter the text \*, or give it a false sense, and thus father arguments on authors which they never drew. Far be from us such odious practices, which are the feeble and scandalous resources of desperate causes, and capable of giving a bad opinion of the best †.”

## II.

Mr. Gibbon's *loose manner of quotation* makes a capital article in my charge against him. In this how strikingly does he resemble his brother historian Voltaire ?

“ You certainly ought, for the instruction of your readers, to have named the *book and page*. You say somewhere that you do not like such exact quotations; you certainly have good grounds for your dislike; and yet such quotations are useful. It is true, that attention and labour are required to render them exact, and you have other things to mind besides comparing passages ‡.” — “ To quote in so vague a manner, is to tell the reader, search, if you chuse, and find if you can §.”

## III.

It is plain, that Mr. Gibbon had other designs in writing the two last chapters, than merely “ to connect the progress of Christianity with the civil state and revolutions of the Roman Empire ||:” Voltaire's opponent in like manner taxes him with

\* See *Traité sur la Tolerance*, c. xii. p. 105. 107. and *Letters of the Jews*, p. 288. 303, 304. vol. 1.

† Ibid. p. 78.

‡ Ibid. p. 211.

§ Ibid. p. 79.

|| Vind. p. 3.

having

having another end in view, besides that which he openly professes.

“ But whoever will read over your two chapters, with any degree of attention, will perceive, that besides the end which you openly profess, you have another in view, which though not less apparent, is not less real. You want to bring under this head, as well as you can, a heap of little cavils against our sacred writings, which you squeeze in right or wrong. As these small criticisms, collected out of Bolingbroke, Morgan, Tindal, &c. (who themselves borrowed these from others) are your chief study; we shall consider them with proper attention. As you are never weary of repeating them, we must not be weary of answering them\*.

#### IV.

Mr. Gibbon, under the mask of a pretended reverence for religion, exposes its seeming imperfections. The comparison therefore which Voltaire's adversary draws between him and Shaftesbury, admirably suits our historian.

“ Shaftesbury, if we believe some of his learned countrymen, was an enemy of revelation, and the more dangerous because in his attacks he seems to profess respect. “ *He never attacks it face to face, or with serious arguments, but with rail-  
“ lery and ironical reflections, which look as if  
“ they fell by chance. He continually protests that  
“ he firmly believes all the facts and doctrines which  
“ are discovered by revelation. He is convinced that  
“ our religion is divine, and our sacred writings in-  
“ spired; that every human understanding should bow  
“ down to them, and that none but libertines and pro-*

\* Jews Letters, p. 238.

“*fane men could absolutely deny, or dispute the authority of a line, or a syllable in these holy books.*” This is a kind of attack which favours more of cunning than of candour, and more of stratagem, than of true learning. He followed the method of some unbelievers who went before him, and other modern free-thinkers like it so much, as you well know, Sir, that we meet it in every page of their writings. But these thread-bare stratagems, this old way of making war, cannot deceive any body now. The world is weary of seeing men fighting under a mask, and would think an open attack hereafter more honourable \*.”

## V.

Many proofs appear in my *Examination*, that Mr. Gibbon writes inconsistently, and advances contradictions: in this also he has formed himself upon the model of Voltaire.

“Perhaps we are mistaken, Sir,” say the Jews letters, “but the result of this comparison seems to be, that you have no fixed principles or determinate opinion on these matters at all, as is your case on many others. You agree with those writers in some places, and contradict them in others, nay you contradict yourself in the plainest manner, still shifting from one opinion to another, according as caprice or the prejudice of the moment hurries you away †.

## VI.

I have shewn, to a great extent, how servile a Plagiarist Mr. Gibbon is; but perhaps neither he,

\* Jews Letters, p. 205. See also p. 209, where the shameful mode of controversy adopted by *Collins* is exposed.

† Ibid. p. 109.

nor his admirers, will be much affected by this charge, as it makes him approach still nearer to his great original. "He, Voltaire, has collected all the antiquated objections of *Collins, Tindal, &c.* and *dressed them up anew* for the very same purpose for which they were first proposed. Indeed he seldom adds any thing from his own fund, and when he does, we have no reason to admire his learning or accuracy \*."

"Mr. de Voltaire only repeats the English Deist's words. In these petty criticisms, he is so far from having the honour of invention, that he has not even that of applying them properly. Could he think that no one would ever read *Tindal*, or be acquainted with the learned answers given to him? What a part do these oracles of philosophy act, these mighty geniuses, who think themselves born to give light to the universe, when they become, every moment, the poor copies of a poor writer †!"

We have now seen how exactly Mr. Gibbon, and Mr. Voltaire agree as to their *mode* of writing, in *six* peculiar characteristics: we shall still add to the likeness, if we consider the general tendency and substance of their objections.

## VII.

Mr. Gibbon has attacked the Jewish religion, in order to subvert it, as being the foundation of Christianity; and most shamefully misrepresents the state of the Jews, to make them appear vile and despicable.

So also, "Mr. de Voltaire," says his opponent, "has cast many cruel and ill-grounded aspersions on the Jewish nation and religion:—The

\* Jews Letters, p. 5.

† Ibid. p. 294, and note.

“ real purpose of his attack seems to be the same  
 “ of the Deists, to undermine the Christian reli-  
 “ gion, by destroying the authority of the Old  
 “ Testament, on which it is founded \*.”

It is hard indeed to say, whether the language of Voltaire or of Mr. Gibbon, in treating of the Jewish nation and religion, is most severe: though their aspersions are equally groundless. They both speak of them as *bating*, and being in turn *bated by, the whole race of mankind, as the natural enemies of the human species*: and each of them most maliciously asserts that this mutual animosity arose from the unsocial spirit of their law and manners †.

Thus far the *Jews letters* have furnished materials for the parallel between Mr. Voltaire and Mr. Gibbon. Another striking feature or two, which may be traced in both, is well worthy our notice.

### VIII.

Like our Historian, “ Mr. de Voltaire ascribed  
 “ the cruel and bloody persecutions which the  
 “ Christians endured under Nero, Domitian, De-  
 “ cius, &c. &c. ‡ to their own intolerant zeal:”  
 Mr. Gibbon stands forth the apologist of the Roman magistrates, and is bold to assert, that, as  
 “ the rights of toleration were held by mutual  
 “ indulgence: they were justly forfeited by a re-  
 “ fusal of the accustomed tribute §.” And as  
 Voltaire || owns that he was obliged to Mr.

\* *Jews Letters*, p. 5.

† Compare Voltaire's expressions, *Additions à l'Hist. Gener. tom. viii. p. 174*, and p. 30; with Gibbon's words, *equally cruel and unjust, Decline and Fall*, p. 453, 454.

‡ *Letters of Jews*, p. 344, vol. i. Voltaire, *Traité sur la Tolérance*, c. vii. viii. p. 56—58. 68.

§ *Decline and Fall*, p. 521, &c.

|| *Traité sur la Tolérance*, c. ix. p. 68—70.

Dodwell's dissertation *on the small number of Martyrs* ; Mr. G. may think it less disgraceful that he has so largely borrowed from the same work.

## IX.

To compleat the picture with a touch which will forcibly engage the reader's attention : Voltaire says, in his *Essay on General History* ; " nothing is " more worthy our curious attention, than the " manner in which it pleased God to establish his " church, by the concurrence of *secondary causes* " to promote the eternal decrees of his Providence \*." How is the magnified importance of Mr. Gibbon's objections lowered, when his boasted discovery of philosophically accounting for *the establishment and progress of Christianity from secondary causes*, thus appears to be an argument which Voltaire had, before him, pressed into the service of infidelity !

Voltaire, like our Historian, wishes to persuade us that *toleration*, with regard to religion, universally prevailed under the mild genius of polytheism ; and that intolerance, with respect to worship, was peculiar to the Jewish law ; and religious wars known only among Christians †.

Let the reader judge then if I had not the strongest reason to assert, in my *Examination*, that " our modern pretenders to scepticism and " infidelity, gain a name among some by retail-

\* " Rien n'est plus digne de notre curiosité que la manière dont Dieu voulut que l'Eglise s'établît, en faisant concourir les causes secondes à ses décrets éternels. Laissons respectueusement ce qui est divin à ceux qui en sont les depositaires, & attachons nous à l'histoire." *Essai sur l'Hist. Gener. tom. i. p. 52.*

† Letters of Jews, p. 270, &c. *Decline and Fall*, ch. ii. and ch. xv.

" ing



“ ing objections which have been long ago started,  
 “ and as long since refuted and exploded ; and  
 “ that they adopt the same indefensible mode of  
 “ supporting their attacks on Christianity.”

As Mr. Gibbon, perhaps with some reason, complains of the coarseness and harshness of my language, it affords me an opportunity of repeating my former caution—“ The artful insinuations of so agree-  
 “ able a writer, imperceptibly seduce his readers ;  
 “ who, charmed with his style, and deluded with  
 “ the vain pomp of words, may be apt to pay  
 “ too much regard to the pernicious sentiments  
 “ which he means to convey †.”

A late ingenious publication ‡ has in some measure forestalled the animadversions which I purposed to make on that high colouring and false gloss with which Mr. G. states his facts, as best suits his bias and inclination §. “ He dwells,” says he, speaking of Mr. Gibbon, “ with visible  
 “ pleasure upon the faults of the first professors  
 “ of Christianity, *paints them in glowing and ani-*  
 “ *mated colours*, exposes with a really ready, though  
 “ affectedly reluctant hand, their follies and their  
 “ weaknesses || :”—“ And his answer to the charge

† Exam. p. ii.

‡ Dialogues of the Dead with the Living. Printed for N. Conant and H. Payne.

§ Mr. G.’s own words, respecting *the apparent ridicule of hereditary succession* to the throne, indicate his mode of writing. “ *Satire and declamation*,” says he, “ may paint *these obvious topics in the most dazzling colours*.”

And that the Satirist or Declaimer may present facts to our view in whatever light he thinks proper, by artful colouring, this very instance is a proof: for we may either laugh, or be serious, according as we prefer the ridiculous or solid arguments of the Historian. See Decline and Fall, ch. vii. p. 171, 172.

|| Dialogues, p. 181. The author of the Dialogues puts these words into the mouth of Archbishop Langton:

“ of

“ of the adversaries of Christianity, is not given  
 “ with half the glowing vivacity which sparkled  
 “ in his style, when he held the accusation out to  
 “ view \*.”

Considered in this light, the sentiments of Dr. Gregory, on the true end of History, are most strictly applicable to Mr. Gibbon; though his censure was levelled at another Historian, no friend to Christianity.

“ The principal and most important end of History,” says that pleasing writer, “ is to promote the interests of liberty and virtue, and not merely to gratify curiosity. Impartial history will always be favourable to these interests. The elegance of its style and composition is chiefly to be valued as it serves to engage the reader’s attention. But if an Historian has no regard to what we here suppose should be the ultimate end of history, if he considers it only as calculated to give an exercise and amusement to the mind, he may undoubtedly make his work answer a very different purpose. The circumstances that attend all great events are so complicated, and the weaknesses and inconsistencies of every human character, however exalted and amiable, are so various, that an ingenious writer has an opportunity of placing them in a point of view that they may suit whatever cause he chooses to espouse. Under the specious pretence of a regard to truth, and a superiority to vulgar prejudices, he may render the best cause doubtful, and the most respectable character ambiguous. This may be easily done without any absolute deviation from truth; by only suppressing some circumstances, and giving a high colouring to others; by taking advantage of the frivolous

\* Dialogues, p. 185.

and

and dissolute spirit of the age, which delights in seeing the most sacred and important subjects turned into ridicule ; and by insinuations that convey, in the strongest manner, sentiments which the author, from affected fear of the laws, or a pretended delicate regard to established opinions, seems unwilling fully and clearly to express. Of all the methods that have been used to shake those principles on which the virtue, the liberties, and the happiness of mankind depend, this is the most dangerous, as well as most illiberal and disingenuous. It is impossible to confute a hint, or to answer an objection that is not fully and explicitly stated, &c. †."

For my own part, to answer his censure, if an answer be necessary, I might plead, that in the first essay of so young an author, those embellishments of style could not reasonably be expected, which add lustre to the writings of an Historian, " who has employed several years of his life, and " several hundred pages, on the Decline and Fall " of the Roman Empire ;" and that to draw a comparison between the unformed style of a Bachelor of Arts, and the *polished diction* of Dr. Watson, is unfair and ungenerous : but on these things I will not lay stress, only reminding my reader that " the subject of my performance did not de- " mand ornaments of style, smartness of wit, or " accuracy of argument ; all that was necessary " to be done, was to relate matters of fact with " clearness and impartiality. And as little skill was " required in the execution of it, little or no me- " rit can be claimed from the result of it."

To use the words of the learned and able Dr. Burgh,

† Gregory's Comparative View, sect. iv. p. 221.

“ I have not, by any means, sought to lay before the world a chastised composition ; to convince, *not to amuse*, has been my sole endeavour ; my sole object, in an arduous and laborious undertaking, the advantage of my reader ; and my end I shall consider as happily attained to, if I shall decide the judgment of even a single hesitating Christian \*.”

Mr. Gibbon with becoming gratitude acknowledges the indulgence of a *deluded* public, “ to his errors in the first volume of an important history, and their favourable reception of the whole work, which required even a *third* edition †.” In another place, and on a different occasion, speaking of polytheism, he tells us, that “ whilst the Roman magistrates acknowledged the general advantages of religion, they were convinced—that in every country the form of superstition, which had received the sanction of time and experience, was the best adapted to the climate, and to its inhabitants. That *they* knew, and valued the advantages of religion, as it is connected with civil government ‡.”

And when he apologises for their cruel persecution of the Christians, one reason which he assigns is, that “ by embracing the faith of the Gospel, the Christians incurred the supposed guilt of an unnatural and unpardonable offence. They dissolved the sacred ties of custom and education, violated the religious institutions of their country, and presumptuously despised whatever their fathers had believed as true, or had revered as sacred §.”

\* Burgh's Inquiry, Advertisement, p. x.

† Vind. p. 16.

‡ History, p. 32, 33.

§ P. 523.

How

How far he has in these passages signed his own condemnation, let the *deluded* public judge. Is not the *nature* of Christianity, as well as of History, so *respectable that it ought not to be lightly violated by the rude hand of controversy*\*? Is not some regard to be paid to the established religion of his country? And is not some deference due from Mr. Gibbon to the received opinions of his ancestors, in the capacity of a good subject, especially as being himself a member of the legislature; or is Christianity so much more absurd than Paganism, that they who attack it are justified in their presumption?

For my own part, with regard to the favour of the public, I should esteem myself highly culpable, were not I also to return the sincerest thanks of a grateful heart for a reception of my work, favourable beyond my most sanguine expectations. I too, had I been so disposed, might have boasted of more editions than one, as the copies of the first impression were eagerly bought up; but I thought it my duty that my *Reply* should precede a second publication. I would by no means imitate Mr. Gibbon, as FAME is not my grand motive †, in suffering the same errors

\* Vind. p. 5.

† The sublime Milton has properly distinguished between *true* and *false* Fame.

Satan, in his speech to our Saviour in the wilderness, says,

Wherefore deprive L. 23

“ All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself

“ The *fame* and glory, *glory the reward*

“ That sole excites to high attempts, &c.

“ To whom our Saviour calmly thus reply'd.

— “ what is glory but the blaze of fame,

“ The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd?

“ They praise, and they admire, they know not what,

“ And know not whom, ————— &c.

“ This

errors to continue through *three* editions; and if my *Examination* appears again, it shall not only be exempt from those blemishes, which my adversary has pointed out, but the inaccuracies shall be corrected which his sagacity did not discover. And I have taken care that the *Reply* should be printed in the same size as the *Examination*, that while they exist—which cannot be long, since Mr. Gibbon's authoritative voice has condemned them to oblivion—they may be bound and read together, and that the latter publication may correct and confirm the former.

Now that I am discharging the debt of gratitude, I must acknowledge my obligations to Mr. Gibbon himself, for stimulating me to undertake a laborious task, and to pursue this unusual course of study, at a time when the activity of youth might otherwise have been engaged in more amusing, but perhaps less profitable, reading.

But it was surely impolitic in him to depreciate my learning. For however just his accusation might be, yet he should have remembered, that my ignorance was his only safeguard. And he

- “ This is true glory and renown, when God,
- “ Looking on th' earth, with approbation marks
- “ The just man, and divulges him thro' heaven
- “ To all his angels, who with true applause
- “ Recount his praises,” &c.

Paradise Regain'd, book iii. l. 23—66.

So also in his *Lycidas*,

- “ *Fame* is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
- “ Nor in the glist'ring foil
- “ Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies ;
- “ But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
- “ And perfect witness of all-judging Jove ;
- “ As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
- “ Of so much *fame* in *heaven* expect thy meed.”

Lines 77—85.

must

must be conscious, that if I had directed my studies to the perusal of *Tillemont, Voltaire, Crevier, Le Beau*, and other French Historians, I should have discovered still more, how little he had consulted *original materials*; or rather proved, that it really was his *invariable practice* through the *whole* of his history, to transcribe the moderns, and by their aid and guidance to make a parade of the learning of the ancients.

But, be this as it may, if I have been able, with the little learning I have acquired, to hurt him so sensibly, he may perhaps learn an useful hint from the saying (which I have somewhere met with) of a General who was by his enemies represented on a medal sleeping, and Fortune winning his battles for him: *If, says he, I could do so much when I was asleep, let them take care that they do not awake me.*

But, above all, his allowing me “to assume the merit of extorting from him the notice which he had refused to more honourable foes,” requires my special thanks. I am sensible this distinction was not owing to my having the least pretensions to any superior excellence above his other opponents; but to my being singular in not alleviating the smart of his wounds, by the balm of unnecessary compliment. To those, who have shared with me our author’s declamatory invective, I believe, I need make little apology. The public has done justice to their labours, employed in exposing the superficial sophistry of Mr. Gibbon. And if I may judge from my own feelings, they will view that burlesque and scurrility towards which his genius is so strongly bent, with the contempt it deserves\*.

\* “Mordear opprobriis falsis mutemque colores?

“Falsus honor juvat & mendax infamia terret

“Quem nisi mendacem & mendosum?”

HORAT. Ep. i. 16.

For

For, to use the words of one who was attacked in a similar way : “ I shall look upon that to be least of all an answer ; because it’s no part of the dispute. For I’ll never contest that point with him, but allow that he has no ill talent at farce and grimace \*.

And, on this account, I have one more obligation to Mr. Gibbon ; which is, that he has hereby furnished me with abundance of excellent repartee, which I have not hesitated to employ, (with what success and propriety I presume not to say) on several occasions in the course of my *Reply*. Let him recollect, for the future, that Shylock’s exclamation of “ *a second Daniel*,” supplied *Gratiano* with a most keen retort :

“ *I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me the word.*”

I have now returned my adversary thanks for the advantages which I have received from him ; and he ought surely, in his turn, to acknowledge some obligation to be due to me and his other opponents, who have perhaps convinced him, that it will be necessary not only to *consult* but *faithfully to represent original materials*, that the public may have less reason to call in question either his learning or veracity, in the next volume.

I shall close this *Reply* in the very apposite words which the learned Dr. Bentley addresses to his opponent :

“ Besides this, I may justly expect, that if he proceeds further upon this subject, he should freely acknowledge those faults, that I have refuted in

\* Bentley’s Preface to the Dissertation on Phalaris, p. 112.



his last work. I have done the like myself ; and I here sincerely declare, that I am not conscious of one error, that he observed in my *Examination*, which I do not own in my *Reply*. I design nothing but a search after truth, and will never be guilty of that mean dissingenuity, to maintain a fault that I am convinced of. I require therefore the same candour from him ; and if he does not perform it, I shall not reckon it as an answer. For if he has not either judgment enough to know when he's confuted, or sincerity enough to confess it, 'tis to no purpose at all to continue the controversy."

F I N I S.







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